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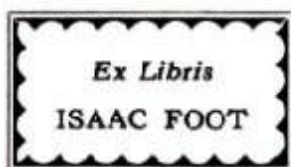
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# ITALY AND HER INVADERS

*HODGKIN*

**VOL. I. PART I.**

London

HENRY FROWDE

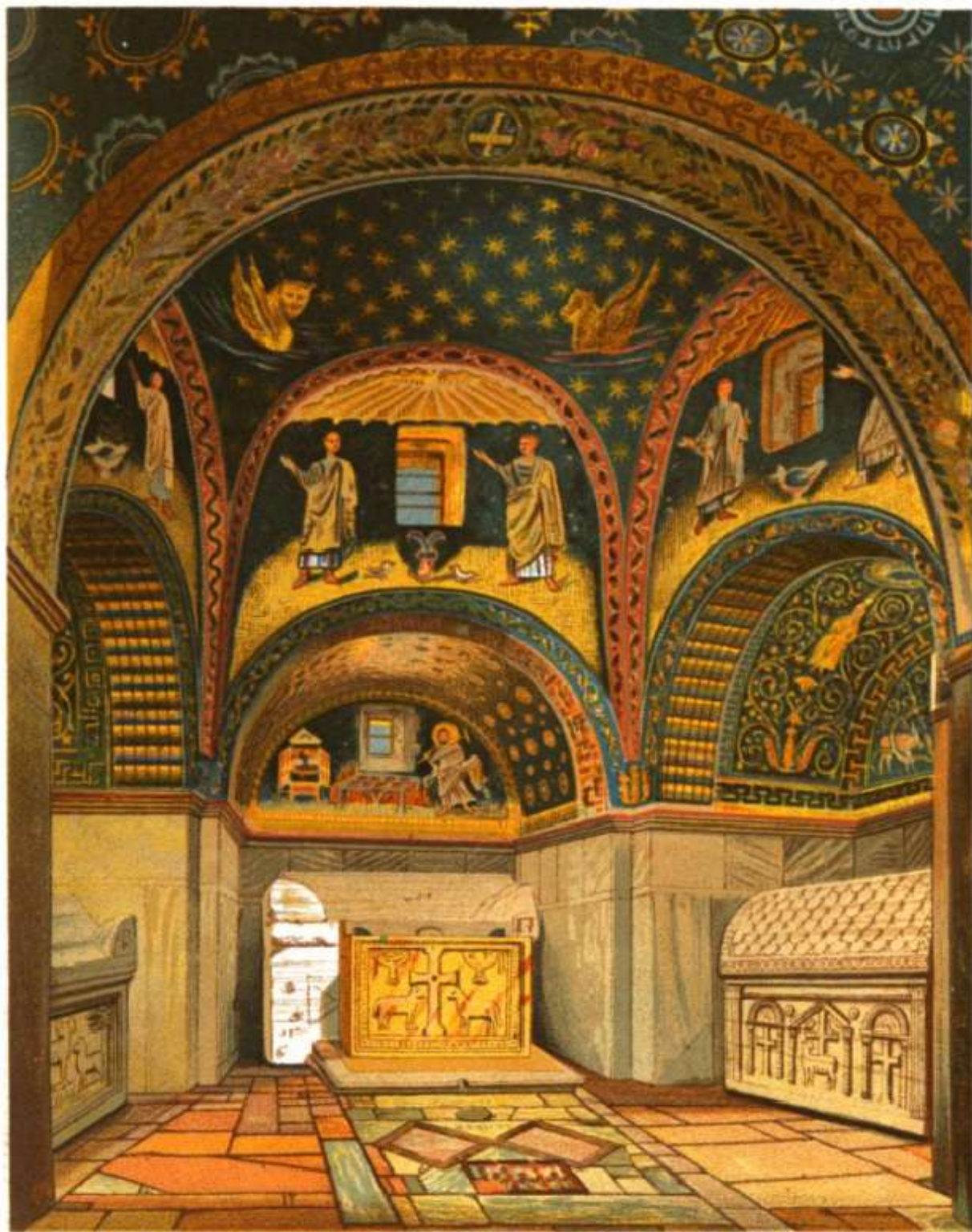
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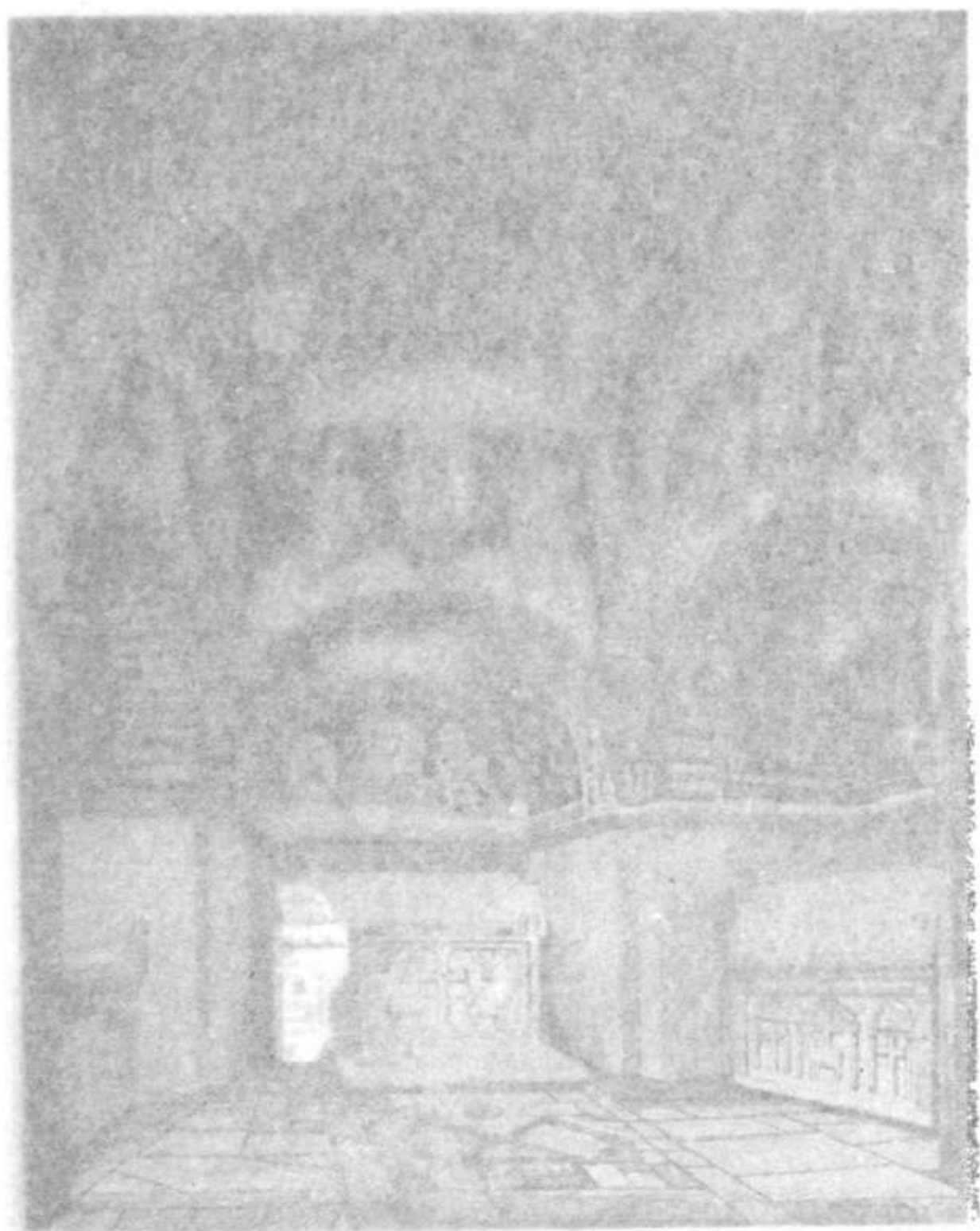
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MAUSOLEUM OF GALLA PLACIDIA, RAVENNA.







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**ITALY**  
**AND**  
**HER INVADERS**

**BY**  
**THOMAS HODGKIN**  
D.C.L., OXFORD AND DURHAM  
LITT. D., DUBLIN  
FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

**VOLUME I**  
**BOOK I. THE VISIGOTHIC INVASION**  
**PART I**

**SECOND EDITION**  
*WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS*

**Oxford**  
**AT THE CLARENDON PRESS**  
**M DCCC XCII**

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*Mich.*

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

### OF VOLS. I. AND II

---

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to meet the requirements of two different classes of readers. For the sake of the general reader, who may not have his Gibbon before him, nor a Latin Dictionary and Classical Atlas at his elbow, I have taken for granted as little special knowledge of Roman history as possible, I have generally kept the text clear of untranslated quotations, and I have explained, with even tedious minuteness, the modern equivalents of ancient geographical designations, and have sometimes used the modern name only, at the cost of an obvious anachronism.

On the other hand, as I have proceeded with my work, and become more and more interested in the study of my authorities, I have begun to indulge the hope that I might number some historical scholars among my audience. To these, accordingly, I have addressed myself almost exclusively in the notes, whether at the foot of the page or at the end of the chapter; and these notes, for the most part, the

general reader may safely leave unstudied. Should my book be fortunate enough to come into the hands of a scholar, he is requested to pardon many an explanation of things to him trite and obvious, which I should never have introduced had I been writing for scholars alone.

It will be observed that when sums of money are spoken of, I have generally given the equivalent in sterling. This does not, however, convey much information to the mind unless it be also stated what was the 'purchasing power' of a sum equivalent to a pound sterling in those days. I would gladly have added a chapter on 'The History of Prices under the Empire,' and had collected some materials for that purpose, but I feared to weary my readers with a discussion which might have interested only a few. The general conclusion at which the most careful modern enquirers seem to have arrived is thus stated by Gibbon: about the year 470, 'the value of money appears . . . . . to have been somewhat higher than in the present age.' The general rise of prices since Gibbon's time may justify us in making this statement somewhat stronger. It is probable that in Imperial Rome £100 would have had about the same command over commodities which £200 has in our own day. But of such enormous differences in value, when measured by the precious metals, as exist between the England of Victoria and the England of the Plantagenets there is here no question.

I have made a slight departure from precedent by introducing more illustrations than are usual in a work of this description. The chief object of the chromolithographs of ecclesiastical edifices at Ravenna is to



convey to those who have not visited that place some idea of the general effect of the Mosaics. They are engraved from drawings carefully made on the spot by Mr. George Nattress. The coins here figured are, with one exception<sup>1</sup>, all in the British Museum. I am indebted to the kind assistance of Mr. H. A. Grueber (in the coin department of that institution) for their selection and arrangement. For the maps, though chiefly founded on Smith's Classical Atlas, I must be myself responsible. Some boundaries are conjecturally drawn, but I have endeavoured to make this conjectural element as small as possible.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to three friends, with whom this book, which has given me six years of happy labour, will always be connected in the mind of the author. My brother-in-law, Mr. Justice Fry, first encouraged me to attempt such an undertaking, and the advice of Mr. Bryce and the Rev. M. Creighton was exceedingly helpful at a later period of the work. My hearty thanks are also due to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, for undertaking the publication of the work of one who is a stranger to the University of Oxford.

The volumes now published form a chapter of history which is complete in itself; but if life and health be continued to me, I hope to narrate hereafter the fortunes of the Ostrogoths and Lombards, and thus to bring my work down within sight of the august figure of Charles the Great.

THOS. HODGKIN.

BENWELLDENE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE:

5th December, 1879.

<sup>1</sup> Aelia Flaccilla, wife of Theodosius I.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

### OF VOLS. I. AND II

---

I HAVE re-written the greater part of the First Volume, which, as I could not but feel, was of too slight and sketchy a character to be of much use to a historical student. In the process I have unavoidably added a good deal to its bulk, and that which was originally one volume is now virtually two, though for the convenience of those who already possess the later volumes the numbering is unchanged.

I have also re-written, and I trust improved, most of the chapter on early Vandal history. With that exception, the Second Volume remains nearly in its previous condition: nor do I anticipate the necessity of making much change in the Third and Fourth Volumes, should another edition of these be required.

Though still conscious of the many deficiencies of the book, I hope that these changes may have made it somewhat less unworthy of the ancient and venerable University from whose Press it issues, and which since the publication of the first edition has bestowed upon me its honorary degree.

It will be seen that in connection with the story of Bonifacius and Aetius I have ventured on a little

friendly controversy with the late Professor Freeman, the sad tidings of whose death reached me just as I was correcting my last proof-sheets. It will always be one of my pleasantest remembrances in connection with this book that it procured for me the great privilege of his friendship, and few of his scholars will feel the blank caused by his death more deeply than I.

I desire to express my thanks to Mr. G. M<sup>c</sup>N. Rushforth, M.A., of St. John's College, who has prepared the Index to this Edition. Besides sparing me a large amount of irksome toil he has made several valuable suggestions, some of which I regret to say reached me too late for inclusion in the text, and have had to take their place in the list of *Corrigenda*.

The labour of thus revising my earlier work has hindered me from making the progress which I desired with that portion of the book which is to deal with the history of the Lombard invaders of Italy, but I hope to complete it in two years at the latest.

THOS. HODGKIN.

FALMOUTH :  
13<sup>th</sup> April, 1892.



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### CORRIGENDA.

- Page 107, note 2, for 'prune' read 'p rune.'  
P. 146, l. 13 from bottom, for 'Fausta' read 'Faustina.'  
P. 210, l. 16 from bottom, for 'Praetorian Prefect of the City of Rome' read  
'Praetorian Prefect and Prefect of the City of Rome.'  
Pp. 225-233, supply throughout the marginal date 375.  
P. 344, ll. 17-21, insert double quotation marks before 'Wrinkled' and after  
'brook.'





F. J. Leas Del.

For the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

COINS, FIRST THREE CENTURIES OF THE EMPIRE.

### INSTRUCTIONS.

© 1997 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. CCC 0890-6460/97/010000-11

$$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}} \right) = \frac{\partial L}{\partial x}$$

the life of this history is the story of a country which classical Italy made the centre of her empire, and the centre of government and law for the Western world, because that Italy of the Middle Ages was rich in intellectual life, and poor in material resources, and it was poor in colonial possessions and in military strength.

the author himself will find a more  
satisfactory in the English

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and diffused the most liberal of principles, England, France, and Germany were filled with the principles of liberalism. Other Englishmen were now relating the history of that republic so popular in its alternate periods of revolution and reform, during which Italy, however, however ancient, was *per se* new.

As a result, the  $\beta$  values are not significantly different from zero, and the  $\alpha$  values are not significantly different from one. The  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  values are also not significantly different from each other. The  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  values are also not significantly different from the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  values of the other models. The  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  values are also not significantly different from the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  values of the other models.

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1038.

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left( \frac{1}{\rho} \right) = - \frac{1}{\rho^2} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} = - \frac{1}{\rho^2} \left( - \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} \frac{dx}{dt} \right) = \frac{1}{\rho^2} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} \frac{dx}{dt} = \frac{1}{\rho^2} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} \frac{dx}{dt} = \frac{1}{\rho^2} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} \frac{dx}{dt} \quad (14)$$

1.  $\mathcal{L}_1$  and  $\mathcal{L}_2$  are linear spaces.

$$E_{\text{eff}} = \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{E_1} + \frac{1}{E_2} \right) \quad (1)$$





## INTRODUCTION.

### PLAN OF THE WORK. SUMMARY OF ROMAN IMPERIAL HISTORY.

THE object of this history is to trace some of the INTROD.  
changes by which classical Italy, the kernel of the Plan of  
Roman Empire, the centre of government and law for Work.  
the Western world, became that Italy of the Middle  
Ages, whose life was as rich in intellectual and artistic  
culture as it was poor in national cohesion and en-  
during political strength.

To some other historian will belong the delight of  
telling worthily in the English language the story of  
those wonderful Italian Commonwealths, which nur-  
tured and diffused the sacred flame of civilisation,  
while England, France, and Germany were still over-  
shadowed by the darkness of feudalism. Other English  
scholars are even now relating the history of that suc-  
ceeding age, so perplexing in its alternate appeals to  
our admiration and our abhorrence, during which Italy,  
still in the van of European nations, was passing from  
the mediaeval into the modern phase of thought and  
manners, the Age of the Renaissance. But my busi-  
ness is at the other, and to most readers the much  
less interesting, end of her history. I have to deal  
with the period of fading light and increasing ob-

VOL. I.

B

INTROD. security during which the familiar Italy of the Classics slowly assumes the character which we term Mediaeval.

Italy is the country with which our interests will be permanently bound up, and other nations are mentioned only in so far as they directly or indirectly influenced her destinies. But I must warn the reader that this limitation will often be found to be of the most elastic nature. Every wandering tribe which crossed the Alps, eager to pierce its way to the dis-crowned capital of the world, contributed something to the great experiment of the making of the new Italy ; and the previous history of that tribe, whether it dwelt in Lithuanian steppes or wasted Chinese provinces, is therefore within the scope of our enquiry, which proposes to deal not only with Italy but also with her invaders.

In the period covered by the present volumes, moreover, it is impossible wholly to dissever the history of Italy from that of the other portions of the Roman Empire. This is shown in the lives of two of the first statesmen whom we meet with. A Spanish gentleman (Theodosius), clothed with the Imperial purple at Constantinople, by a battle fought among the mountains of Friuli makes himself master of Italy, and dies at Milan, leaving the dominion of Western Europe to his son. The chief minister of that son (Stilicho), a soldier of German extraction, born probably in Thrace, first emerges into notice as ambassador to the king of Persia, is married beside the Bosphorus to a daughter of Spain, wars by the Rhine, and dies at Ravenna.

Do what we may, therefore, we shall find our story continually diverted from the country between the Alps and Etna by the perturbing influences of other

countries, especially by Byzantium, in the earlier part of this period, and by Gaul in the later. Still, the reader is requested to bear in mind that it is the history of Italy primarily which I shall endeavour to set before him, that the course of the narrative is prescribed by the order of the successive appearances of the barbarians upon the Italian theatre, and that I am not so presumptuous as to endeavour to tell over again what has been already told by the unsurpassable skill of Gibbon, the story of the Fall of the Roman Empire.

Five great invasions by the barbarians, corresponding roughly to five generations of mankind, or 160 years, mark the period which may be called *The Death of Rome*. These five invasions are those of the Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards. Alaric the Visigoth first led a hostile army into Italy A. D. 400: Alboin the Lombard entered the same country with his conquering host A. D. 568.

In the first two volumes I shall attempt to tell the story of the first three invasions.

The First Book, which covers the longest interval of time, will deal with the events of the close of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, considered either as causes or as consequences of the great *Visigothic* invasions (A. D. 400 to 414). After a sketch of the earlier history of the Gothic nation, I shall relate with some detail the history of the Empire, both in the East and West, after the death of Julian (363), in order to explain the series of events which ultimately brought the Visigothic invaders into Italy. For it was from the East that the impulsion came. The cause which set the Visigoths in motion, and which more than any

INTROD. other determined the great migration of the Germanic tribes into the countries forming the Roman Empire, was the appearance of the Huns, a horde of Asiatic savages, on the confines of the Visigothic territory between the Black Sea and the Carpathians, in the year 376. (By a coincidence which may help to fix both dates in the memory it was precisely a century after this date, in the year 476, that the boy-Emperor Romulus Augustulus was pushed from his throne by the first Teutonic ruler of Italy, Odovacar.)

The Second Book, after describing the efforts of scholars to throw light on the darkness of the history of the *Huns* previously to their arrival in Europe, will deal chiefly with those eventful years in the middle of the fifth century, during which Italy and the whole of Europe, Teutonic as well as Roman, trembled before the might of Attila.

The Third Book will be devoted to the early history of the *Vandals*, their invasions of Italy, and the revolt of the German mercenaries in the Roman army (476).

During the three centuries and a half which intervened between the death of Augustus and the beginning of the epoch which we are going to consider in detail, the Emperors who governed Rome may be divided broadly into six great classes :

Julian and  
Claudian  
Emperors.  
A.D. 14-68.

I. The *Julian and Claudian* Emperors, four men whose names have burnt themselves for ever into the memory of the human race, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. All these men in different ways illustrated the terrible efficacy of absolute world-dominion to poison the character and even to unhinge the intellect of him who wielded it. Standing, as it were, upon the Mount of Temptation, and seeing all the kingdoms of the

world and all the glory of them stretched at an im-INTROD.  
measurable distance below their feet, they were seized  
with a dizziness<sup>1</sup> of the soul, and, professing themselves  
to be gods, did deeds at the instigation of their wild  
hearts and whirling brains such as men still shudder to  
think of. Their hands were heavy on the old Senatorial  
families of Rome, heavier still on their own race, the  
long-descended posterity of Venus and of Iulus. In the  
genealogy of the descendants of Augustus, 'stabbed,'  
'poisoned,' 'starved to death,' are the all but invariable  
obituary notices of the women as of the men. But the  
imperial Reign of Terror was limited to a compara-  
tively small number of families in Rome. The provinces  
were undoubtedly better governed than in the later  
days of the Republic, and even in Rome itself the  
common people strewed flowers on the grave of Nero.  
Frightful as was the waste of money on the wild ex-  
travagances of Caligula and Nero, it perhaps did not  
outrun the supply received from the vast confiscated  
estates of the slaughtered senators; and the tax-  
gatherer, at any rate in Italy and the West<sup>2</sup>, was not  
yet that name of terror to the provincials which he  
became in after days.

2. The *Flavian Emperors* ought, perhaps, hardly to be  
classed together, so little was there in common between  
the just, somewhat hard, rule of Vespasian, or the two  
years' beneficent sway of Titus, 'the delight of the

Flavian  
Emperors.  
A. D. 69-96.

<sup>1</sup> This phrase is taken from Count Champagny, who in his book  
*Les Césars* has sketched with a master's hand the chief characters  
of that terrible time.

<sup>2</sup> Finlay considers that as far as Greece was concerned the first  
century of the Christian Era was the most miserable portion of the  
time passed under Roman dominion (*History of Greece*, vol. i, p. 80,  
ed. 1877).



INTROD. human race,' and the miserable tyranny of Domitian. But the stupendous Colosseum, the Arch of Titus, and the Amphitheatre at Verona, serve as an architectural landmark, to fix the Flavian period in the memory; and one other characteristic was necessarily shared by the whole family, the humble origin from which they sprang. After the high-born Julii and Claudii, the descendants of pontiffs and censors, noblemen delicate and fastidious through all their wild debauch of blood, came these sturdy sons of the commonalty to robe themselves in the Imperial purple, and this unforgotten lowness of their ancestry, while it gave a touch of meanness to the close and frugal government of Vespasian, evidently intensified the delight of Domitian in setting his plebeian feet on the necks of all that was left of refined or aristocratic in Rome. All the more strange does it seem, when we consider the humble extraction of these Emperors, that their name should have remained for centuries the favourite title of Emperors no way allied to them in blood, a Claudius (Gothicus), a Constantine, a Theodosius, and many more, having prefixed the once ignoble name of Flavius to their own. And hence, by a natural process of imitation, the barbarian rulers who settled themselves within the limits of the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, Burgundian, Lombard, Visigoth, adopted the same mysteriously majestic fore-name, unconsciously, as we must suppose, selecting the very epithet<sup>1</sup> which best described their own personal ap-

<sup>1</sup> Autharis the Lombard adopted the name of Flavius about the year 584, Recared the Visigoth about the same time. The intention appears to have been in each case to signify to their subjects in Italy and Gaul respectively that they claimed some portion of the dignity of the Roman Emperors (Paulus Diaconus de Gestis Langobardorum ;

pearance<sup>1</sup>, yellow-haired sons of the North as they were, INTROD.  
among the dark-coloured Mediterranean populations.

3. The *Adoptive Emperors* who followed the Flavian Adoptive  
Emperors.  
A. D.  
96-192. dynasty conferred upon the Empire the inestimable boon of nearly a century of internal peace, order, and good government. If we cannot acquiesce without reservation in the celebrated statement of Gibbon, that 'If a man were called on to fix the period in the history of the world in which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus,' we can truly say that we know not where to find any other consecutive series of sovereigns which can be compared to these illustrious names, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus. Valiant, accomplished, just, able to bear their share in the rough work of the defence of the Empire against external aggression, yet not delighting in war, these men, with many differences of temperament, of intellectual power, and of moral excellence, were alike in their earnest single-heartedness of purpose to use the vast power entrusted to them for the good of their world-wide realm. Alike in central Rome and in the remotest provinces of the Empire, we find the traces of their beneficent activity, working not as if for a year or a generation, but for eternity. The column at Rome which commemorates the Dacian triumphs of Trajan measures also the greatness of the excavations for the magnificent *Forum Trajani*. From the Lower Danube to the Black Sea, from the

cf. note in Dr. Abel's German translation, p. 60). Odovacar, if the coin attributed to him be correct, also called himself Flavius.

<sup>1</sup> Flavius, from flavus, light-haired.

INTROD. Upper Danube to the affluents of the Rhine, from the Tyne to the Solway, from the Frith of Forth to the Frith of Clyde, men can still trace the boundary lines of the Roman Empire traced by the mighty hands of Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus. Not even the Colosseum of Vespasian or the Pantheon of Agrippa impresses the mind with a sense of the majestic strength of Rome so forcibly as the massive bulwarks of a bridge erected by Hadrian's cohorts over some little British stream unknown to the majority even of Englishmen, or the square and solid blocks of an Imperial guard-house on some remote and solitary Northumbrian moor<sup>1</sup>. And of these works, with that peculiar quality of grand permanence which they bear upon their fronts, and which seems to say that they are the work of men who could count near a thousand years of empire behind them, and could count upon more than a thousand years of empire before them, the best and most characteristic are those which were reared in the second century by order of these princes whom we have called the Adoptive Emperors.

But for one consideration, the method of selection which gave to the Roman world so splendid a succession of rulers would seem to be so good as to deserve to be re-introduced into practical politics. The Commonwealth having once been fortunate enough to secure a wise and virtuous ruler, and having entrusted him with as much power as possible short of absolute despotism, leaves it to him to select, in the maturity of his years and judgment, the man whom he deems likeliest to carry on his great work in his own spirit of

<sup>1</sup> I allude especially to the bridge over the North Tyne at Chollerford and the Mile-castle at Housesteads.



absolute devotion to the welfare of the State. Avoid-<sup>INTROD.</sup>  
ing thus the oft-recurring absurdities of popular election, avoiding also the hap-hazard of hereditary succession, wherein Nature seems sometimes to amuse herself by producing sons who are the very burlesques and parodies of their fathers, the State obtains the selection of the man presumably the fittest of all her children to govern in his turn. He is adopted by the reigning sovereign, calls him father, is treated by him with the confidence and affection due to a son, steps naturally into his vacant place at his death, and carries forward the great and beneficent schemes of which he has learnt the secret.

An admirable theory, and one which owing to a combination of favourable circumstances did, as we have seen, for nearly a century work out most beneficial results in practice. But every one can see what is the deep-rooted and enduring principle in human nature which must cause it to fail in the long run. 'And Abram said, "Behold to me thou hast given no seed: and lo, one, born in my house is mine heir." And behold the word of the Lord came unto him saying, "This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thy loins shall be thine heir<sup>1</sup>."' Neither the proverbial jealousy between kings and their sons, nor the nobler principle of postponing family affection to the good of the State, can be trusted to counterbalance, for more than a generation or two, the irresistible instinct which makes a man prefer to work for his own offspring rather than for the offspring of other men, and unwilling to play at adopting sons when he has sons of his own growing

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xv. 3, 4.

INTROD. up around him. So, having got this principle of hereditary succession deep in the nature of things, and likely to last as long as the human race itself, the wisest course seems to be to accept it, make the best of it, and by the safeguards of what we call constitutional government prevent it from doing more harm than can be helped to the world.

4. No more striking illustration both of the strength of the parental instinct and of the mischiefs of hereditary succession, could be afforded than by the change which befell the Roman Empire in the year 180, when Marcus Aurelius, wisest, most patriotic, and most self-denying of emperors, instead of adopting a successor, left his power to his son Commodus, most brutal and profligate of tyrants.

Barrack  
Emperors.  
A. D.  
192-284.

The convulsions which followed his murder (192) were the prelude to the reigns of a class of men whom we may describe as the *Barrack Emperors*, whose reigns made up a century as miserable and ruinous as the period of the Adoptive Emperors had been prosperous and tranquil. The open sale of the Imperial dignity to Didius Julianus (193) by the Praetorian Guards was only the expression, in an unusually logical and shameless form, of the motives which animated the Roman armies in the successive revolutions with which they afflicted the State. The proclamation of a new emperor brought with it a liberal *donative* to the common soldiers, promotion and the chance of lucrative employment in the civil hierarchy to the officers. Therefore, as a skilful tradesman makes his profit by rapidly 'turning over' his capital, even so in the interests of the military profession must emperors be made and unmade with a rapidity which almost takes

away the breath of the historian who tries to record INTROD. these bewildering changes. And the Praetorians of Rome were not to have a monopoly of this profitable speculation. It had been discovered long ago that 'emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome,' and in Britain, Gaul, Spain, Africa, on the Persian frontier, wherever the legions were stationed, *pronunciamentos* (to borrow a term from Spanish politics) were constantly occurring, and second-rate generals were perpetually being hatched into emperors. To-day the purple robe, the radiated crown, the epithets, 'Augustus,' 'Pius,' 'Felix,' 'Invictus,' 'Pater Patriae,' and all the cant of conventional courtliness; to-morrow the headless trunk, the dagger-holes in the purple, the murdered children, and a legion in the adjoining province greedily fingering their new donative and shouting the names of another pious, happy, and unconquered emperor who had been mad enough to climb the slippery slope.

In the period of seventy-three years which elapsed between the death of Severus and the accession of Diocletian, no fewer than eighteen emperors were recognised at Rome, besides a crowd of anti-emperors in the provinces, whose shifting shadowy forms defy enumeration. Thus the average length of the reign of each of these comparatively legitimate emperors was only four years and three weeks. What state could prosper which changed even its ministers as often as this? But the course of events during the two preceding centuries had made of the emperor more than any single minister, far more of course than any constitutional king. He was the very mainspring of the State: in the army, in the courts of law, in the admi-

A.D.  
211-284.

INTROD. nistration, in legislation, his impulse was needed to set the machine in motion, his guidance to keep it in the right track. There are some great names, some heroic natures belonging to this time. Decius, Claudius, and Aurelian will all claim a share of our admiration when we glance at their deeds in recounting the early history of the Gothic inroads. But what could the most strenuous ruler accomplish with so short a tenure of power? He was just beginning to learn his work when a mutiny of the soldiery or the sword of a barbarian, or one of those terrible pestilences which denoted and increased the misery of the time, carried him off, and the skein, more tangled than ever, fell into the hands of a too often incapable successor.

Add to this primary evil of the rapid change of rulers others which were derived from it—inroads of the Germanic tribes, triumphs of the increasingly arrogant Persian kings, dilapidation of the frontier fortresses, utter exhaustion of the Treasury, and above and beyond all, a depreciation of the currency such as the world hardly saw again till the days of the French *assignat*; and the picture of this most miserable century is, not indeed complete, but at least sufficiently dark to disenchant us with that theory of ‘Caesarism,’ of which it furnishes a fitting illustration.

One point ought not to be left unnoticed. Not till towards the end of this period of the Barrack Emperors do we meet with any traces of real generalship among the Roman military leaders. The wretched system of *pronunciamentos* not only drained the life-blood of the State but ruined the discipline of the army. It was seen then as it has so often been seen since in the history of the world, that if once the interests of the







DIOCLETIAN



CONSTANTIUS I



CONSTANTINE I



CONSTANTIUS II



JULIAN II



JOVIAN.



VALENTINIAN I



VALENS.



GRATIAN



VALENTINIAN II



*J. J. Lee Del.*

*For the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.*

EMPERORS OF THE THIRD AND FOURTH CENTURIES.

DIOCLETIAN—VALENTINIAN II.







military profession are allowed to become a paramount INTROD. consideration in politics, it soon ceases to be an efficient instrument even for its own purpose of scientific man-slaughter.

5. This time of anarchy was closed by the accession of Diocletian, who inaugurated a period short in duration but productive of boundless consequences to the world, the period of the *Partnership Emperors*. Himself borne to power by something not very unlike a Partner-ship Emperors. mutiny of the troops on the Persian frontier, he nevertheless represented and gave voice to the passionate longing of the world that the age of mutinies might cease. With this intention he remodelled the internal constitution of the State and moulded it into a bureaucracy so strong, so stable, so wisely organised, that it subsisted virtually the same for more than a thousand years, and by its endurance prolonged for many ages the duration of the Byzantine Empire. With the same end avowedly in view but doubtless in part also at the promptings of his own superhuman pride, Diocletian severed himself more decisively than any of his predecessors from the Augustan policy of recognising in the emperor only the first of Roman citizens, and ostentatiously claimed from his subjects a homage no less servile than that which was rendered to the most absolute of Oriental despots. The diadem worn after the Persian fashion, the jewelled buskins with their very soles tinged with purple, the reverence, not by kneeling but by complete self-prostration on entering the Imperial presence, exacted from all subjects of whatever rank—these innovations, almost as alien to the spirit of Augustus as to that of either Brutus, were now contentedly acquiesced in and formed part henceforward of the tra- A.D. 284-326.

INTROD. ditions of the Roman monarchy. So, too, did the pompous and inflated phraseology of the sovereign and his retinue, of which some samples, such as Sacred Majesty and Serene Highness, have passed into the language of modern courts and survive even to our own day.

But the most important principle which Diocletian introduced into the politics of the Empire was Administrative Division. Recognising the impossibility of properly ruling those vast dominions from one only seat of government, recognising also the inevitable jealousy felt by the soldiers of the provinces for their more fortunate brethren under the golden shower of donatives at Rome, he divided the Roman world into four great Prefectures, which were to be ruled, not as independent states but still as one Empire by four partners in one great Imperial firm. This principle of partnership or association was made elastic enough to include also the time-honoured principle of adoption. Diocletian associated with himself the stout soldier Maximian as his brother Augustus; then these two Augusti adopted and associated two younger men, Galerius and Constantius, as junior partners in the Empire, conferring upon them the slightly inferior title of Caesars. The Caesar Constantius governed from his capital of Trier the Prefecture of the Gauls, containing the three fair countries of Britain, France, and Spain. Maximian from his capital (not Rome but Milan) administered the Prefecture of Italy, comprising Italy Proper, Southern Germany, and North-Western Africa. Galerius from Sirmium (near Belgrade) ruled the Prefecture of Illyricum, containing the countries which we lately knew as European Turkey, and Greece, with part of Hungary, while the rest of the Empire,

namely Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, bore the name INTROD. of the Prefecture of the East, and owned the immediate sway of Diocletian himself, who fixed his capital at Nicomedia in Bithynia.

According to this system while the younger monarchs, the Caesars, were engaged in the tough work of the defence of the frontiers, their more experienced colleagues were to apply their matured intellects to the less exciting task of internal government and legislation. Civil war, it was fondly hoped, was rendered impossible; for whenever an Augustus died his Caesar stood ready to succeed him, and the nomination of the new Caesar would be decided by the calm collective wisdom of the three reigning sovereigns.

The scheme was really deserving of a certain measure of success, and had Diocletian's colleagues all been men as just and moderate as Constantius Chlorus, it probably would have succeeded, at least for a generation or two. But, as every one knows, it failed, and that in the very lifetime of its author. After nineteen years of sovereignty, on the whole well and wisely exercised, Diocletian retired from the cares of government to his superb palace and his cabbage-garden by Salona on the Dalmatian shore of the Adriatic. Much against his will, the elderly soldier, Maximian, retired likewise. The health of Constantius was visibly declining, and the choice of new Caesars was left to Galerius, the worst of the Imperial quartett, who chose two men, one of them the half-witted Maximin Daza, his own nephew, and both even more unsuited for empire than himself. Then steamed up and boiled over a very devil's-cauldron of resentments and rivalries. Constantine the Great claims successfully the purple worn by

INTROD. his dead father, Maximian retracts his abdication and associates his son Maxentius: everybody who has any conceivable claim upon the Empire is declaring himself Augustus and his son Caesar: before the death of Diocletian no fewer than six men are all posing as full Roman Emperors. We hasten on to the familiar end. By A. D. 314 two Emperors alone, Constantine and Licinius, are left, the former in the West, the latter in the East. They become brothers-in-law, they endeavour to persuade the world, perhaps even their own hearts, that they are friends. But it is of no avail; the two queen-bees cannot dwell together in the same hive; each is bound to destroy or be destroyed. At the  
 A. D. 323. battle of Chrysopolis Licinius is defeated; soon after he is slain, and Constantine remains sole heir of the magnificent inheritance of Julius and of Marcus.

Yet let it not be thought that the scheme of Diocletian utterly failed. When Constantine dedicated in 330 the magnificent city by the swift Bosphorus, which still bears his name, that diamond which still makes so many sore hearts among the envious queens of the world, he was but giving bodily shape to the best thought of the deep brain of Diocletian, and that thought, if it ruined Rome, perhaps saved the Empire.

Theologian  
Emperors.

A. D.  
323-363.

6. Constantine the Great and his family make up the last but one of our Imperial classes, and may be styled the *Theologian Emperors*. There is this one feature common to Constantine the Eclectic, to Constantius the Arian, and to Julian the 'Apostate,' that with all of them the relation of man to the unseen world was the topic which most profoundly interested the intellect, whether it succeeded or failed in moulding the life. Constantine's youth and early manhood were



passed amid the din of Diocletian's terrible persecution INTROD. of the Christians, a persecution which must have possessed a fascinating interest for him on account of his father's suspected and his mother's avowed attachment to the new faith. That persecution was not the work so much of the statesmanlike Diocletian as of the coarse and tyrannical Galerius: and yet we may almost say, looking to the relative positions of the Empire and the Church, that Diocletian himself was bound to persecute if he did not believe<sup>1</sup>. The Christian Church, a strong and stately hierarchy, proclaiming its own eternal truth and the absurdity of all other faiths, had grown up within the easy latitudinarianism of the Roman Empire, an *imperium in imperio*. Its Bishops were rapidly becoming the rivals of the Imperial Vicars, its Patriarchs of the Imperial Prefects. Even the wife and daughter of the greatest of the Emperors were believed to be Christians at heart, and the most popular of his colleagues more than tolerated the new faith. In these circumstances, urged on by the malign influence of Galerius, and influenced perchance contrary to the advice of his deeper nature by the traditions of his predecessors and his supposed duty to the Empire, Diocletian became a persecutor, and having undertaken the bloody task brought to its execution the same thoroughness, the same square-headed pertinacity which characterised his whole career as a statesman.

He failed. The Empire which had accepted the challenge of the Church was signally defeated in the

<sup>1</sup> For a sympathetic, almost admiring estimate of Diocletian's character from the Christian point of view, see an interesting monograph by A. J. Mason (now Canon Mason), on *The Persecution of Diocletian* (Cambridge, 1876).

INTROD. encounter. Thenceforward it was in the nature of things that the Church should dominate the Empire. The corruption which was wrought in Christianity by the atmosphere of the Court of Constantinople is admitted more or less by all schools of Christian thought. But, on the other hand, unbelief itself recognises in the long theological duel of the fourth century something more than the mere hair-splittings of ambitious and worldly ecclesiastics. The constancy of Diocletian's martyrs had achieved the long delayed triumph of Christianity. The Roman world, which had been for three centuries in doubt what 'this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is,' was now prepared, not unanimously, but by an overwhelming majority, to accept it as 'the fixed Highway to the Infinite and Eternal,' as furnishing the long sought-for answer to the weary riddle of human existence.

But what *was* the answer? In what precise terms was it framed? As our poet says:—

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,  
Vast images in glimmering dawn  
Half shown are broken and withdrawn<sup>1</sup>.'

There had been something of vagueness in the language of the earlier teachers of Christianity, in the very fulness and passion of their faith something almost like Agnosticism in their manner of speaking about heavenly things. This must now exist no longer. If the Gospel was indeed the new philosophy making void all that Zeno and Epicurus had taught before, it must have its own philosophical scheme of the nature of the Godhead, clear and sharp as anything in the

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson, *The Two Voices*.

writings of Plato or of Philo, and capable of being defended by irresistible logic in all the schools of Alexandria. The attempt to elaborate such a theological system out of the statements of the disciples of Jesus concerning their Master involved the Church and the Empire in fifty years of the Arian controversy. INTROD.

To settle this controversy, as he hoped, but in reality to open the lists and invite all the world to take part in it, Constantine summoned (A.D. 325) the august Council of Nicaea. From the standard of orthodoxy established in the Nicene Creed, Constantine himself before his death, in A.D. 337, visibly declined, and his son, Constantius II, eventually the sole inheritor of his power, became one of its bitterest opponents. The twenty-three years during which Constantius filled the throne of the East are emphatically the Age of Councils. Councils were held at Antioch, at Tyre, at Sardica, at Arles, at Rimini, and at Constantinople. In the words of a contemporary historian<sup>1</sup>, 'Even the service of the posts was disorganised by the troops of Bishops riding hither and thither [at the public expense] to attend what they call Synods, convened by the Emperor's order, in the hope of bringing every man round to his own opinion.'

A strange spectacle truly, and one which it is difficult to think of without scorn. Not only the great and intelligible feud between Athanasius and the Arians, but the endless divisions and sub-divisions of the Arians themselves, Homoeusians and Homoeans and Euno-mians, the innumerable creeds, the Bishops set up and pulled down by the Imperial authority, make up a history which in the modern reader stirs alternately

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, xxi. 16, 18.

INTROD. the sensations of weariness and amusement. But amusement changes into contempt, and contempt into indignation, when he discovers that Constantius, the main-spring of all this theological activity, was a moody and suspicious tyrant, deeply imbrued with the blood of his nearest kindred, constantly sentencing better men than himself to death at the bidding of the envious eunuchs who were the ministers of his luxury. Yet even for the perpetual theological fussiness of Constantius one might plead for a milder sentence in consideration of that influence of the spirit of the time, from which no man can altogether free himself. The whole current of the age swept men's minds irresistibly into theology. All that remained of the intellectual subtlety of the Greek, of the practical common sense of the Roman, was engaged in solving the momentous question, 'What is that true-opinion<sup>1</sup> concerning the Nature of Christ, the possession of which secures us eternal life, and the deviation from which, even by a hair's-breadth, means eternal ruin?' And the organ for discovering this true-opinion being a duly convened council of Bishops, and the expression of it a creed with duly accentuated anathemas upon all 'right-hand errors and left-hand deflections,' where could the uneasy conscience and mystified brain of a theologising Emperor find rest if not in the bosom of yet another council formulating with the conventional anathemas yet another creed?

The death of Constantius during the successful insurrection of his cousin Julian swept away for a time these endless creed-spinners. It may seem strange to class the so-called 'Apostate' among the Theologian Em-

<sup>1</sup> ὁρθὴ δόξα.



perors, yet every student of his life will admit that INTROD. with him too man's relation to the unseen universe was the point round which all his being turned. He was no Positivist (to use the language of our own day); though not a persecutor, except of the mildest type, he was no Latitudinarian in matters of religion: he was deeply, seriously, earnestly impressed with a belief in the existence of the old Olympian gods, and tried, but without a trace of success, to restore their worship. He did *not* say, dying in his tent by the Tigris of the wound inflicted by the Persian javelin, 'Oh Galilean, thou hast conquered!' yet he might truly have said so, for the one dearest wish of his life was foiled. The pagan Theologian Emperor had made no enduring impression upon his age. Once more had the full wave of Imperial power dashed against the calm figure of the Christ, and once more it retired, not a fold of the seamless vesture disarranged.

7. The last category of Emperors (from A.D. 363 to 476) might be styled *The Sovereigns of the Sinking Empire*: but as we have now reached the threshold of our special subject, it will be convenient to forego any general sketch, and to reserve the more detailed picture of these Emperors till we have given some account of the early history of the Barbarians with whom they had to contend.



# BOOK I.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY HISTORY OF THE GOTHs.

#### Authorities.

#### *Sources:—*

OUR chief authority for the early history of the Goths is BOOK I.  
CH. 1.  
JORDANES or (as his name was spelt in the first printed editions of his works) JORNANDES. Both as the earliest Teutonic historian whose writings have come down to us, and as having preserved much valuable information as to the Goths which would otherwise have perished, Jordanes claims an amount of attention to which his literary merits would never have entitled him.

All that we know certainly about the life of Jordanes (beyond the fact that he composed his histories between the years 550 and 552) is contained in the following sentences from his pen (*De Rebus Geticis*, cap. 50): 'The Scyri and Sadagarii and certain of the Alani, with their general (dux) named Candac, occupied the Lesser Scythia and Lower Moesia [after the overthrow of the Huns, A.D. 454]. Of which Candac, Paria, father of my father Alanoviiamuthes, and therefore my grandfather, was notary so long as Candac himself lived <sup>1</sup> . . . I also, Jordanes, although an

<sup>1</sup> Here follows a sentence about a certain Gunthiciis, nephew of Candac or of Paria, which is so unintelligible in the reading adopted by Mommsen that I will not trouble my readers by translating it. Possibly the meaning is that Jordanes was 'notarius' to this Gunthiciis. But the passage is obscure, and the barbarous names really convey no idea to our minds.

BOOK I. unlettered person, was a notary before my conversion' [that is, CH. 1. entrance into the monastic state]<sup>1</sup>.

We learn from these words that the family of Jordanes were settled during the latter part of the fifth century in the provinces south of the Danube, which are now called Bulgaria and the Dobrudseha. He may probably have been of Ostrogothic descent—we shall see hereafter that a considerable Ostrogothic remnant was left in these lands—but his grandfather was engaged in the service of the duke or chieftain of a motley confederation of Seyri, Alani and the less known tribe of the Sadagarii. The minister whose duty it was to put Duke Candac's decrees into writing and to keep some record of the judicial proceedings of his rude tribunal was called his *notarius*, and this office so long as Candac lived was held by the grandfather of Jordanes, Paria.

There can be little doubt that the childhood and early manhood of Jordanes were spent in these lands of the Lower Danube, and that this fact accounts for the strong *Moesian* colouring, which, as Mommsen points out<sup>2</sup>, pervades his history. It is also highly probable that in later life he left this district and made his way either to Constantinople or to Italy. That he became a monk is clear from his own statement quoted above ('ante conversionem meam'): that he renounced (if he had ever professed it) the Arian creed of his forefathers, is proved by the whole tenour of his history; that he became a bishop is possible, but we have no proof of the fact. Bishop of Ravenna he certainly was not, though he is so styled in some early editions of his works. Of all the suggested identifications none is more probable than that which makes him the same person as Jordanes, Bishop of Crotona, who was at Constantinople in 551<sup>3</sup>. But all this is mere conjecture.

A word or two may be said as to the varying forms of his name. In the earlier MSS. this is written (in the nominative case) *Jordannis*. There can be no doubt however that his name, a tolerably common one in the sixth century, was derived from the

<sup>1</sup> 'Ego item, quamvis agrammatus, Jordanes, ante conversionem meam notarius fui.'

<sup>2</sup> See pp. x-xii of the Prooemium to his edition of Jordanes. He notices the enormously disproportionate number of Moesian names in the history compared with those belonging to other provinces of the empire.

<sup>3</sup> See the quotation from Pope Vigilius' 'Damnatio Theodori Episcopi' in Mommsen's Prooemium, xiii. n. 22.

river Jordan, which has an obvious connexion with the baptismal ceremony. The correct form of the name of that river is *Jordanes*, but by a vulgar error which appears in many MSS. of the Bible from the ninth century downwards, and is found even in the Codex Amiatinus (written in the beginning of the eighth century) *i* is substituted for *e*. It is clear that Mommsen, the latest editor of the works of the Gothic historian, is right in refusing to perpetuate this blunder of ignorant transcribers, and restoring the true literary form *Jordanes*. Though the name is not one which has obtained any extensive currency among the nations of modern Europe, *Giordano Bruno* is a witness that it lingered on through the Middle Ages among the Christian names of Italian baptisteries.

The other form of the name, *Jornandes*, has given rise to much discussion. It is the form adopted in the first printed edition of his works (that published by Peutingar in 1515), in Muratori's collection of the writers of Italian history, in Grotius' *Historia Vandalarum*, and in fact by most editors till the research of German scholars in the present century showed that the authority of MSS. was in favour of the other form. The name appears as *Jornandes* in two MSS. of the tenth and eleventh centuries<sup>1</sup>, which Mommsen designates as belonging to the second family of codices. The great German philologist, Jacob Grimm, interprets the name as signifying 'the bold boar,' and argues that this warlike Gothic appellation was changed (perhaps on his 'conversion' to the monastic state) to the more peaceful and pious *Jordanes*. The majority of scholars however, while admitting the possibility that the original text may have been written '*Jordanes sive Jornandes*,' prefer to consider the latter form as due merely to the carelessness of the tenth century copyists.

The only extant works of *Jordanes* are a short treatise on Roman history, generally known as *De Regnorum et Temporum Successione*, and one on Gothic history which is commonly entitled *De Rebus Geticis*, but which he apparently called *De Origine Actibusque Getarum*. With the former we have no present concern; our business is with the Origin and Acts of the Goths. *Jordanes*' own account of this performance (written as has been before said about the year 551) is contained in the following

<sup>1</sup> Ottobonianus and Breslaviensis.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

prefatory words, 'When I was wishing to sail in my little bark along the shore of a sheltered coast, and to catch—as a certain person hath said—some tiny fishes out of the ponds of the Ancients, you compel me, brother Castalius, with sails unfurled, to launch out into the deep, and leaving the work which I have now in hand concerning the abbreviation of the chronicles [the abstract of Roman History just referred to] you persuade me that in my own words I should condense into one little book the twelve volumes of Senator concerning the origin and acts of the Goths, beginning from olden time and coming down through generations and kings even to the present day. A hard enough command assuredly and apparently imposed by one who does not choose to know the weight of this labour! Nor do you perceive that my breath is all too weak to fill his so magnificent trumpet of speech. Beside every other weight is the fact that not even free access to those books is given to me that I may understand the author's meaning; but, not to tell lies, I did some time ago, by the kindness of his steward, receive those books for a three days' perusal<sup>1</sup>.'

The history of Jordanes is then, according to its author's own account of it, a hastily-executed abridgment of the twelve books of Gothic History of CASSIODORUS SENATOR<sup>2</sup>. Of the life and labours, literary and political, of this Roman statesman, who was for thirty years the chief adviser of Theodoric and his descendants, much will have to be said in future volumes of this history. It will be sufficient here to state that the one great aim of all his endeavours was to weld together the Ostrogothic warriors and the Roman citizens into one harmonious people under the sovereignty of the Amal kings, and that the composition of the Gothic History was undoubtedly part of this grand scheme. This work was probably executed by him about the year 520<sup>3</sup>, and he himself says of it (speaking through the mouth of his young Gothic sovereign Athalaric): 'He (Cassiodorus) extended his labours even to our remote ancestry, learning by his

<sup>1</sup> 'Super omne autem pondus, quod nec facultas eorundem librorum nobis datur, quatenus ejus sensui inserviamus, sed, ut non mentiar, ad triduanam lectionem, dispensatoris ejus beneficio libros ipsos antehac relegi.'

<sup>2</sup> Senator was not a title, but part of the name of Cassiodorus; and any of his contemporaries would understand that he was meant when 'duodecim Senatoris volumina' were spoken of.

<sup>3</sup> Mommsen (pp. viii and xli) brings the composition of the History down to the years 525-533; but I prefer, with Usener, to assign it to the years 516-521. See my Letters of Cassiodorus, p. 29.



study that which scarcely the hoar memories of our forefathers retained. He drew forth from their hiding-place the kings of the Goths, hidden by long forgetfulness. He restored the Amals to their proper place, in all the lustre of their lineage, proving indubitably that for seventeen generations we have had kings for our ancestors. He made "the Origin of the Goths" a part of Roman history, collecting as it were into one wreath all the growth of flowers previously scattered over the expanse of many books. Consider therefore' (Athalaric is addressing the Senate) 'what love he showed to you in praising us, by his proof that the nation of your sovereign has been from antiquity a marvellous people; so that ye who from the days of your forefathers have ever been deemed noble, are still ruled by the ancient progeny of kings <sup>1</sup>.'

BOOK I.  
Ch. 1.

From this account given by Cassiodorus of his work, we can see that he had two objects before him in writing it. One was to glorify the Amal line, the line of kings from which Theodoric, his master, had sprung, by giving literary shape to the dim traditions, the Sagas and battle-songs by which the memory of those ancestors had hitherto been preserved. The other was to glorify the Gothic people by showing that they too had a respectable historic past, and by bringing them into some sort of relation with the great nations of classical antiquity. In order to do this he made use, doubtless in perfect good faith, of an unfortunate confusion which had arisen in the minds of scholars between the Goths and the Thracian Getae, and also of the vague but convenient term Scythian, which practically included all peoples dwelling north of the Black Sea and east of the Danube.

This second element in the work of Cassiodorus is absolutely without historical value; and the chapters of Jordanes' book which are based upon it must be winnowed away before we can really understand or rightly estimate the materials for history with which he has supplied us. But the other element, the literary expression of the old Gothic traditions, is of almost inestimable value. Whether true in detail or not, these were the histories which filled the minds and flowed from the tongues of the Gothic invaders of the Roman Empire. These formed the historic background of the Past from which the great deeds of their Present stood forth. These were the Iliad and Odyssey

<sup>1</sup> Cassiodori Variarum, ix. 25.

BOOK I. of the Teutonic fore-world. Would that many another Cassiodorus had arisen to preserve these lays, and others like to them sung by the other Germanic tribes, from the oblivion which has fallen upon them!

CH. I.

There can, then, be no doubt that the staple of the work before us is derived from Cassiodorus. How far its actual present shape may be due to the hand of Jordanes is a matter of mere conjecture. Cassiodorus is an author of almost intolerable diffuseness, and probably much of his work might have been retrenched without any great loss to posterity. But Jordanes was evidently a man of very imperfect education, and with no literary insight; and he has probably thrown away much which we should have deemed valuable, as he has retained some things that we could well have spared. He rightly calls himself *agrammatus*, and speaks of his *tenuis spiritus*; but unfortunately he is not only ignorant but dishonest. The preface which has been quoted above, with its wonderful rhetoric about 'sails unfurled,' and 'little fishes,' and so forth, is taken without acknowledgment but with scarcely a word of change, from Rufinus' translation of Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans<sup>1</sup>. He quotes, with an affectation of intimate knowledge of their works, about twenty Greek and Roman writers, of whom he does not seem to have read more than three or four. On the other hand he does not quote Marcellinus Comes, from whom he has taken over without alteration some sentences relating to the deposition of Augustulus. His style, when he is trying to write by himself, is deplorable, the thoughts inconsequent, and the sentences hardly grammatical.

If he really had, as he professes to have had, only three days in which to make his abstract of Cassiodorus, he would be entitled to indulgence on this score. But those who know Jordanes best will be disposed to trust him least on such a point as this. Even a practised man of letters (the opposite of an 'agrammatus') would require three weeks rather than three days for such a task. Different readers will form different opinions on such a point. My own belief is expressed in the words of a German scholar, 'The three days' interval to which Jordanes professes to have been confined for his use of the

<sup>1</sup> This impudent plagiarism seems to have been first detected by Von Sybel. (See Mommsen's note on the passage, p. 53.)



twelve books, is of course humbug<sup>1</sup>: the truth of the matter may have been that through some limitation of time he was hindered from using the work down to the end; and it is also possible that Cassiodorus' style of narrative may, in reference to the reign of Theodoric, have degenerated into panegyric from which an epitomiser found it too hard work to extract the facts.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

Still, notwithstanding his many defects, we are under deep obligations to 'agrammatus Jordanes.' 'The Teutonic tribes, whose dim original he records, have in the course of centuries attained to world-wide dominion. Attila's great defeat (in 451), of which Jordanes is really the sole historian, is now seen to have had at least as important bearings on the history of the world as the battles of Marathon and Waterloo. Thus the hasty pamphlet of a half-educated Gothic monk has been forced into prominence, almost into rivalry with the finished productions of the great historians of Greece and Rome. Of course it stands the comparison badly; but with all its faults the *De Origine Actibusque Getarum* will probably ever keep its place side by side with the *De Moribus Germanorum* of Tacitus, as a chief source of information respecting the history, institutions, and modes of thought of our Teutonic forefathers.'

(I have here copied a few sentences from an article on the subject of Jordanes contributed by me to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. To this, and to the very thorough article (by Mr. Acland) in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, I refer the English student. The chief German authorities on Jordanes are: *Von Sybel* (*De fontibus Jordanis*); *Schirren* (*De ratione quae inter Jordanem et Cassiodorum intercedat Commentatio*); *Köpke* (*Die Anfänge des Königthums bei den Gothen*); *Dahn* (*Die Könige der Germanen*); *Ebert* (*Geschichte der Christlich-Lateinischen Litteratur*); *Wattenbach* (*Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*); and last, but pre-eminent, *Mommsen's* Prooemium to his edition of Jordanes (1882).)

ZOSIMUS (who flourished in the latter part of the fifth century) gives some interesting particulars as to the early inroads of the Goths. His work will be more fully described hereafter.

<sup>1</sup> 'Die dreitägige Frist, die Jordanis zur Benutzung der 12 Bücher gehabt haben will, ist natürlich Schwindel' (Usener, *Anecdota Holderi*, p. 73).

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

DEXIPPUS (who flourished from about 254 to 278) wrote, besides other histories, one entitled *Scythica*, containing the account of the Gothic war in which he bore an honourable part. A few scattered fragments of this work have come down to us. Chief among them is a speech which he is supposed to have uttered to the Athenian soldiery. Photius says that 'his style is simple, grave, and dignified; and he is, so to speak, another Thucydides, but with greater clearness than that author displays; and these qualities are shown especially in his *Scythian histories*.' The fragments of Dexippus, edited by Bekker and Niebuhr, are contained in the First Part of the Bonn edition of the *Byzantine Historians*.

PETRUS PATRICIUS, a rhetorician of Byzantium, born at Thessalonica, Consul in 516, employed in diplomatic service by Justinian at intervals from 534 to 562, wrote a history of the Roman Empire (possibly meant as an abridgment and continuation of that of Dion Cassius), from which a few interesting extracts have been preserved, chiefly relating to the embassies of the barbarian nations to the Emperors. These extracts were made by order of the Emperor CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS (911-959), and are published in the same volume of the Bonn edition of the *Byzantines* which contains the fragments of Dexippus. For several details as to the personal history of Peter see the third and fourth volumes of this history.

GEORGIUS SYNCELLUS, a Byzantine ecclesiastic of the end of the eighth century, who wrote a *Chronicle* 'from Adam to Diocletian,' notwithstanding his late date, has preserved for us some valuable facts which he derived from contemporary authorities.

We glean a few facts from the *Epitomist*, SEXTUS AURELIUS VICTOR, who wrote about 350; and more from the so-called *AUGUSTAN HISTORY*, which contains the lives of Emperors from Hadrian to Carinus, written by various authors (Spartianus, Capitolinus, Trebellius Pollio, and Vopiscus) under Diocletian and Constantine (circa 290-313).

The fragment called ANONYMUS VALESII, which will be more fully described in the next volume, is perhaps the work of a chronicler of the fifth century.

*Guides:—*

Zeuss, *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme*. An invaluable manual of the history of the Teutonic migrations.

Aschbach, *Geschichte der Westgothen* (1827). A sensible and generally accurate monograph on the History of the Visigoths, from the earliest times down to the fall of the Gothic monarchy in Spain. BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

Pallmann, *Geschichte der Völkerwanderung*, vol. i (1863). The author is a very Rationalist in Teutonic history. Notwithstanding the title of his book, his chief object seems to be to show that there was no 'wandering of the nations,' that all the events which brought about the great movement of the barbarian races against the Empire may be accounted for by the most prosaic and commonplace motives; and to a certain extent he proves his point. His book is not very skilfully put together, but his microscopical analysis of the authorities may often be of service to the student.

Herzberg's *Geschichte Griechenlands unter der Herrschaft der Römer*, vol. iii (1875), contains a very spirited and accurate sketch of the Gothic inroads into the Empire in the third century, and especially of the war in Attica.

For the life and literary work of ULFILAS consult :—

Massmann, *Ulfilas. Die Heiligen Schriften in Gothischer Sprache*. Stuttgart, 1857.

Rev. J. Bosworth, *Gothic and Anglo-Saxon Gospels*. London, 1865.

(A complete English edition of Ulfilas is still a desideratum.)

Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, First Series, pp. 185-194 (fourth edition).

Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths, together with an account of the Gothic Churches and their decline, by Charles A. Anderson Scott. (1885.) This admirable monograph, by a young Scottish clergyman, may now be considered as superseding, at any rate for English readers, all previous works on the life of Ulfilas.

My own views on the literary and theological position of Ulfilas are stated at some length in an article on 'Ulfilas, the Apostle of the Goths,' contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1877.

THE Roman Commonwealth, from the time of Marius to that of Julian, had borne the brunt of the onset of various Teutonic peoples. The tribe which bore the Destiny of  
the Gothic  
people.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

distinctive name of Teutones, the Suevi, the Cherusci, the Nervii, the Marcomanni, and in later times the great confederacies which called themselves Free-men and All-men (Franks and Alamanni), had wrestled, often not ingloriously, with the Roman legions. But it was reserved for the *Goths*, whose fortunes we are now about to trace, to deal the first mortal blow at the Roman state, to be the first to stand in the Forum of *Roma Invicta*, and prove to an amazed world (themselves half-terrified by the greatness of their victory) that she who had stricken the nations with a continual stroke was now herself laid low. How little the Gothic nation comprehended that this was its mission; how gladly it would often have accepted the position of humble friend and client of the great World-Empire, through what strange vicissitudes of fortune, what hardships, what dangers of national extinction it was driven onwards to this pre-destined goal, will appear in the course of the following history.

Their ethnological position.

The Gothic nation, or rather cluster of nations, belonged to the great Aryan family of peoples, and to the Low-German branch of that family. From the remains of their language which have come down to us we can see that they were more nearly akin to the Frisians, to the Hollanders, and to our own Anglo-Saxon forefathers than to any other race of Modern Europe.

Ethnological science is at present engaged in discussing the question of the original seat and centre of the Aryan family, whether it should be placed—as almost all scholars a generation ago agreed in placing it—in the uplands of Central Asia, or whether it was situated in the North of Europe and in the neighbourhood of the Baltic Sea. It is not likely that any great value



ought to be attached to the traditions of the Gothic people as to a matter so dim and remote as this : but as far as they go, they favour the later theory rather than the earlier, the Scandinavian rather than the Central-Asian hypothesis.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

The information which Jordanes gives us as to the earliest home and first migration of the Goths is as follows :—

‘The island of Scanzia [peninsula of Norway and Sweden] lies in the Northern Ocean, opposite the mouths of the Vistula, in shape like a cedar-leaf. In this island, this manufactory of nations (“*officina gentium*”), dwelt the Goths with other tribes.’ [Then follows a string of uncouth names, now for the most part forgotten, though the Swedes, the Fins, the Heruli are still familiar to us.]

Jordanes’  
account of  
the pri-  
meval  
home of  
the Goths.

‘From this island the Goths, under their king *Berig*, set forth in search of new homes. They had but three ships, and as one of these during their passage always lagged behind, they called her *Gepanta*, “the torpid one.” Their crew, who ever after showed themselves more sluggish and clumsy than their companions, when they became a nation bore a name derived from this quality, *Gepidae*, the Loiterers.

Their first  
migration

‘However, all came safely to land at a place which was called ever after *Gothi-scandza*<sup>1</sup>. From thence they moved forward to the dwellings of the *Ulmerugi* by the shores of the Ocean. These people they beat in

to the  
Southern  
shore of the  
Baltic.

<sup>1</sup> The *Gothi-scandza* of Jordanes cannot probably now be identified. But the allusions which follow to the *Rugii* (= *Ulmerugi*) and *Vandals*, make it clear that the region of which Jordanes is thinking is the South-East corner of the Baltic coast, probably not far from the modern city of Dantzic.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

pitched battle and drove from their habitations, and then, subduing their neighbours the Vandals, they employed them as instruments of their own subsequent victories.' So far Jordanes.

Testimony  
of Pytheas  
as to the  
settlement  
of the Gut-  
tones  
(Goths?) in  
the amber-  
producing  
region.

This migration from Sweden to East Prussia is doubted by many scholars, but, till it is actually disproved, let it at any rate stand as that which the Gothic nation in after days believed to be true concerning itself. An interesting passage in Pliny's Natural History<sup>1</sup> gives us a date before which the migration (if it ever took place) must have been made. According to this writer, Pytheas of Marseilles (the Marco Polo of Greek geography, who lived about the time of Alexander the Great) speaks of a people called Guttones, who lived by an estuary of the Ocean named Mentonomon, and who apparently traded in amber. Seeing that the name Guttones closely corresponds with that of *Gut-thiuda* (Gothic people), by which the Goths spoke of themselves, and seeing that amber is and has been for 2000 years the especial natural product by which the curving shores and deeply indented bays of the Gulf of Dantzic have been made famous, it seems reasonable to infer that in these amber-selling Guttones of Pytheas we have the same people as the Goths of Jordanes, who must therefore have been settled on the South-East coast of the Baltic at least as early as 330 before Christ<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 'Pytheas Guttonibus Germaniae genti accoli aestuarium Oceani Mentonomon nomine spatium stadiorum sex millium: ab hoc diei navigatione insulam abesse Abalum: illo vere fluctibus advehi [succinum] et esse concreti maris purgamentum: incolas pro ligno ad ignem uti eo proximisque Teutonibus vendere' (Hist. Nat. xxxvii. 2).

<sup>2</sup> I learn from Dahn (Bausteine, i. 4 and Urgeschichte, i. 139) that Müllenhof disputes this identification, and places the amber-country of

Pliny himself (writing about 70 A. D.) assigns to the Guttones<sup>1</sup> a position not inconsistent with that which apparently was given to them by Pytheas; and Tacitus, the younger contemporary of Pliny, after describing the wide domain of the Ligii, who dwelt apparently between the Oder and the Vistula, says that 'behind [that is Northwards of] the Ligii, the Gothones dwell, who are governed by their kings somewhat more stringently [than the other tribes of whom he has been speaking] but not so as to interfere with their freedom<sup>2</sup>. This valuable statement by Tacitus is all the information that we possess as to the internal condition of the Goths for many centuries.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Testimony  
of Pliny  
and  
Tacitus.

But within the last few years the brilliant hypothesis of an English scholar as to the origin of the Runic mode of writing has given an especial importance to the settlement of the Goths at this South-East corner of the Baltic. If that hypothesis be correct—and it appears to find considerable acceptance with those philologists who are best qualified to decide upon its merits—we have not only a hint as to the social condition of the Goths and their kindred tribes, but we have a strong inducement to carry their settlement in East Prussia up to the sixth century before the Christian Era, that is some 200 years before the early date to which we were inclined to attribute it, by the authority of the navigator Pytheas<sup>3</sup>.

Suggested  
connexion  
of the  
Goths with  
the origin  
of Runic  
writing.

Pytheas on the Schleswig-Holstein coast: but I cannot help thinking that probability is in favour of the obvious and old-fashioned view.

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Nat. iv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 'Trans Ligios Gothones regnantur, paulo jam adductius quam caeterae Germanorum gentes, nondum tamen supra libertatem' (Germania, xliii).

<sup>3</sup> Let it be clearly understood, however, that there is nothing in the



BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Geographi-  
cal distri-  
bution of  
the Runes.

It is well known that all over the North of Europe there exists a class of monuments, chiefly belonging to the first ten centuries of the Christian Era, which bear inscriptions in what for convenience sake we call the Runic character, the name *Rûn*, which signifies a mystery, having doubtless been assigned to them from some belief in their magical efficacy. Now these Runes are practically the exclusive possession of the Low German races, the term being used in that wide sense which was assigned to it at the beginning of the Chapter. Runic inscriptions were often carved by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors : they swarm in all Scandinavian lands : they were evidently in use among the Goths and the tribes most nearly allied to them. But along the course of the Rhine, upon the Northern slope of the Alps, by the upper waters of the Danube they are unknown. Franks and Alamanni and Bavarians seem never to have known the Runes. But where they were known, although many modifications were introduced in the course of centuries, there is a remarkable general agreement in all the early Runes, notwithstanding the wide geographical dispersion of the nations by whom they were used. To quote the words of Dr. Isaac Taylor, the author of the hypothesis which we are about to consider<sup>1</sup>, 'This ancient and wide-spread Gothic alphabet is wonderfully firm, definite and uniform. To decipher the inscription on the golden torque of the Moesian Goths by the help of the alphabet stamped on the golden Bracteate from Swedish Gothland is as easy as it would theory about to be stated *inconsistent* with the statement of Pytheas, but rather strongly confirmatory thereof. If this theory be correct, the Guttones were near the amber coasts at the time when Pytheas says he met with them, and their ancestors had been there for centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Greeks and Goths, p. 13.

be to read an Australian tombstone by the aid of a spelling-book from the United States. Distant colonies employ the common alphabet of the mother country.'

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

The origin of this widely spread Alphabet (or, to speak more correctly, of this *Futhorc*, for it begins not with Alpha and Beta but with the six letters whose combination makes the word *Futhorc*, and by that name it is generally called) has been hitherto a Rûn as full of mystery as the inscriptions themselves were to the unlettered warriors who gazed upon them with fascinated fear. That the *Futhorc* could not have been invented by the Northern tribes in absolute ignorance of the historic Alphabet of the nations that dwelt round the Midland Sea, was clear from some of the letters contained in it. *F* for *F*, *R* for *R*, *H* for *H*, *I* for *I*, *B* for *B*, *M* for *M*, could not possibly be all accidental coincidences. Yet on the other hand the divergencies from Mediterranean Alphabets were so many and so perplexing that it was difficult to understand how the Runes could be descended from any of them.

Relation of  
the Runes  
to the  
Latin and  
Greek  
Alphabets.

Some years ago a theory which had obtained considerable currency connected the Runes with the Phœnician Alphabet, and suggested that they were the descendants of the letters introduced to the nations of the North by the adventurous mariners of Tyre. An earlier and perhaps more plausible theory was that the Runes represented the Latin Alphabet as communicated to the Teutonic nations by Roman traders and soldiers in the days of the Empire. An objection, apparently a fatal objection, to this theory is that precisely in the countries where Roman influence affected the Teutonic nations most strongly, in Gaul, in Rhenish Germany, in Helvetia and Rhaetia, no Runes are to be found.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Dr. Isaac  
Taylor's  
theory that  
the Runes  
were bor-  
rowed from  
the Greeks  
of Thrace.

But in the year 1879 Dr. Isaac Taylor, in a little monograph entitled *The Greeks and Goths*, advocated a solution of the enigma which, though daring almost to rashness, may possibly hold the field against all comers.

Examining the forms of Greek letters which were in use among the colonists (chiefly Ionian colonists) whose cities lined the Southern coast of Thrace and the shores of the Aegean in the sixth century B. C., he finds among them many remarkable coincidences with the earliest forms of the Runic Futhorc. Differences many and great still exist, but they appear to be only such differences as, in accordance with the ascertained laws of the History of Writing, might well creep in, between the sixth century before the Christian Era and the third century after it, the earliest period to which we can with certainty refer an extant Runic inscription.

Probable  
commercial  
intercourse  
between  
Greeks and  
Goths in the  
fifth cen-  
tury B. C.

To what conclusion then do these enquiries point? To this, that during the interval from 540 to 480 B. C.<sup>1</sup> there was a brisk commercial intercourse between the flourishing Greek colonies on the Black Sea, Odessos, Istros, Tyras, Olbia and Chersonesos—places now approximately represented by Varna, Kustendji, Odessa, Cherson, and Sebastopol—between these cities and the tribes to the Northward (inhabiting the country which has been since known as Lithuania), all of whom at the time of Herodotus passed under the vague generic name of Scythians. By this intercourse which would naturally pass up the valleys of the great rivers, especially the Dniester and the Dnieper, and would probably again descend by the Vistula and the Niemen, the settlements of the Goths were reached, and by its means the

<sup>1</sup> These limits are indicated by the history of the Greek alphabet and the correspondence between some of its archaic forms and the Runic letters.

Ionian letter-forms were communicated to the Goths, to become in due time the magical and mysterious Runes. BOOK I.  
CH. I.

One fact which lends great probability to this theory is that undoubtedly, from very early times, the amber deposits of the Baltic, to which allusion has already been made, were known to the civilised world; and thus the presence of the trader from the South among the settlements of the Guttones or Goths is naturally accounted for. Probably also there was for centuries before the Christian Era a trade in sables, ermines, and other furs, which were a necessity in the wintry North and a luxury of kings and nobles in the wealthier South. In exchange for amber and fur, the traders brought probably not only golden staters and silver drachmas, but also bronze from Armenia with pearls, spices, rich mantles suited to the barbaric taste of the Gothic chieftains. As has been said, this commerce was most likely carried on for many centuries. Sabres of Assyrian type have been found in Sweden, and we may hence infer that there was a commercial intercourse between the Euxine and the Baltic, perhaps 1300 years before Christ<sup>1</sup>. Trade in  
amber and  
furs.

This stream of trade may have had its ebbings as well as its flowings. Some indications seem to suggest that the traders of the Euxine were less adventurous and 'Scythia' less under the influence of Southern Migration  
of the Goths  
by this  
trade-route  
to the  
Euxine.

<sup>1</sup> I take these facts from a note in Professor Stephens' *Old-Northern Runic Monuments* (vol. iii. p. 267). He also quotes from the orientalist, M. Oppert, an Assyrian inscription, 'whose date is the tenth century B.C., which proves that at that early period Asiatic caravans traversed what is now European Russia, following the rivers, to procure yellow amber from the coast of the Baltic. The merchants of the Asiatic king said that they collected this substance in these seas when the Little Bear was in the Zenith.'



BOOK I.  
CH. I.

civilisation at the Christian Era than six centuries before it. But however this may be, there can be no doubt that the route which had thus been opened was never entirely closed; and when the most Eastern German tribes began to feel that pressure of population which had sent Ariovistus into Gaul and had dashed the Cimbri and Teutones against the legions of Marius, it was natural that they should, by that route along which the traders had so long travelled, pour forth to seek for themselves new homes by the great sea into which the Dnieper and the Dniester flowed.

Probable  
date of this  
migration,  
cir. 170 A.D.

This migration to the Euxine was probably made during the latter half of the second century of our Era: for Ptolemy the geographer, who flourished in the middle of that century, mentions the 'Guthones' as still dwelling by the Vistula and near the Venedae<sup>1</sup>. It was most likely part of that great Southward movement of the German tribes which caused the Marcomanni to cross the Danube, and which wore out the energies of the noble philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius in arduous, hardly-contested battles against these barbarians. The memory of the migration doubtless lingered long in the heart of the nation, and it was, as Jordanes himself says, from their old folk-songs, that the following account of it was derived.

First Mar-  
comannic  
War, 167-  
175.  
Second  
Marcoman-  
nic War,  
178-180.

The migra-  
tion to the  
Euxine as  
described  
by Jor-  
danes.

'In the reign of the fifth King after Berig, Filimer, son of Gadariges, the people had so greatly increased in numbers that they all agreed in the conclusion that the army of the Goths should move forward with their

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. Cap. 5. § 19, Κατέχει δὲ τὴν Σαρματίαν ἔθνη μέγιστα οἱ τε Οὐενεδαὶ παρ' ὅλον τὸν Οὐενεδικὸν κόλπον [the Baltic]. . . . § 20, Ἐλάττονα δὲ ἔθνη νέμεται τὴν Σαρματίαν παρὰ μὲν τὸν Οὐιστούλαν ποταμὸν ὑπὸ τοὺς Οὐενεδὰς Γύθωνες.

families in quest of more fitting abodes. Thus they came to those regions of Scythia which in their tongue are called Oium<sup>1</sup>, whose great fertility pleased them much. But there was a bridge there by which the army essayed to cross a river, and when half of the army had passed, that bridge fell down in irreparable ruin, nor could any one either go forward or return. For that place is said to be girt round with a whirlpool, shut in with quivering morasses, and thus by her confusion of the two elements, land and water, Nature has rendered it inaccessible. But in truth, even to this day, if you may trust the evidence of passers-by, though they go not nigh the place, the far-off voices of cattle may be heard and traces of men may be discerned.

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‘That part of the Goths therefore which under the leadership of Filimer crossed the river and reached the lands of Oium, obtained the longed-for soil. Then without delay they came to the nation of the Spali<sup>2</sup>, with whom they engaged in battle and therein gained the victory. Thence they came forth as conquerors,

<sup>1</sup> Müllenhoff (quoted by Mommsen) says that Ulfilas would have written this word *aujôm*, dative plural of *au*, a well-known Teutonic root, signifying a watered meadow. He thinks that the regions of Oium were probably in Volhynia among the affluents of the Dnieper. The ever memorable passage of the Beresina (1812), which is recalled to us by this story of Jordanes, occurred in a district which lies somewhat north of the Gothic line of march.

<sup>2</sup> ‘*Ad gentem Spalorum adveniunt.*’ Pliny mentions the Spalaei as dwelling on the banks of the Don (*Hist. Nat.* vi. 7), but these seem to be too far east for the Gothic line of march (see Mommsen’s *Index to Jordanes*, p. 164). Zeuss (*Die Deutschen*, p. 67 note) thinks that the name is derived from a Slavonic word *Spol*, signifying companionship or partnership. Thus Spali or Spoli would be not dissimilar in meaning to the German *Ala-manni*.



BOOK I. and hastened to the furthest part of Scythia which  
 CH. I. borders on the Pontic Sea. And so in their ancient songs it is set forth almost in historic fashion<sup>1</sup>.

Even from the brief note-book of Jordanes we can see what a fateful moment was that in the history of the Gothic nation, when, travel-worn and battle-weary, the heads of the long column halted, beholding the monotonous horizon broken by a bit of deeper blue. We can imagine the joyful cry 'Marei!' (Sea) passing from waggon to waggon, and the women and children clambering down out of their dark recesses to see that little streak of sapphire which told them that their wanderings were drawing near to a close. It was true. The journeyers from the Baltic had reached the Euxine, the same sea which, centuries before, the ten thousand returning Greeks had hailed with the glad cry, 'Thalatta, Thalatta!' Well might the Gothic minstrels in the palaces of Toulouse and Ravenna preserve the remembrance of the rapture of their forefathers at that first sight of the Southern Sea.

The Goths probably displaced Slavonic tribes.

The settlement of so large a nation as the Goths (for a large nation they must still have been, notwithstanding all their losses on the journey), cannot have been effected without the forcible displacement of tribes already in possession of the territory to which they migrated. No details of these wars of conquest have come down to us; but, from what we know of the map of Scythia in the

<sup>1</sup> Here Jordanes adds 'quod et Ablavius descriptor Gothorum gentis egregius verissimâ adtestatur historiâ.' I do not think it worth while to trouble the reader with the numerous conjectures as to this 'Ablavius,' whose name, as Mommsen points out, was doubtless really Ablabius. It is sufficient to say that he was probably a Greek or Roman, who (perhaps in the fifth century) wrote a history of the Goths, which was used by Cassiodorus and Jordanes.

third century, it may be conjectured that the Roxolani, the Bastarnae, and perhaps the Jazyges, had to make room for the Gothic invaders, after whose advent their names either disappear altogether or at least occupy a much less prominent position than before. The names of these tribes of barbarians probably convey little information to the reader's mind; but when we observe that they were probably of Slavonic extraction, while the Goths were pure Teutons, we see that we have here an act in that great drama in which Russia and Germany are at this day protagonists. Generally the Slav has rolled westwards over the lands of the Teuton. Here we have one of the rare cases in which the Eastward movement of the Teuton has ousted the Slav.

Thus then were the Goths by the beginning of the third century after Christ seated upon the Northern shores of the Euxine Sea. They appear to have soon become differentiated into two great tribes, named from their relative positions to the East and the West, *Ostrogoths* and *Visigoths*. It is curious to observe that throughout their varied career of conquest and subjugation, from the third century to the sixth, these relative positions continued unaltered. The two tribes, which were perhaps at first severed only by a single river, the Dniester or the Pruth, had for a time the whole breadth of Europe between them, but still the Visigoth was in the West, while reigning at Toulouse, and the Ostrogoth in the East, while serving in Hungary. If we may trust Jordanes, each tribe had already its royal house, supposed to be sprung from the seed of gods, to which it owed allegiance: the Visigoths serving the Balthi, and the Ostrogoths 'the illustrious

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Differentiation of  
Ostrogoths  
and Visigoths.

Royal  
houses :  
Balthi and  
Amals.

BOOK I. Amals<sup>1</sup>. Modern criticism has thrown some doubt  
 CH. I.

upon the literal accuracy of this statement: in fact, we discover from the pages of Jordanes himself that Amals did not always reign over the Eastern tribe, nor kings of any race uninterruptedly over the Western. But, remembering the statement of Tacitus as to the stringent character of the kingship of the Gothones, and knowing that as a rule the prosperity of the German nations waxed and waned in proportion to the vigour of the institution of royalty among them, we may safely conjecture that, during the greater part of the two centuries which followed the migration to the Euxine, the Goths were under the dominion of kings whose daring leadership they followed in the adventurous raids of which we have next to trace the history.

The Gothic  
 outlook to-  
 wards the  
 Roman  
 Empire.

For the two kindred peoples which were thus settled near the mouths of the great Scythian rivers and by the misty shores of the Cimmerian Sea knew that they were now within easy reach of some of the richest countries in the world. Along the Southern coast of that Euxine, the Northern coast of which was theirs, were scattered the wealthy cities of Bithynia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus, from Heraclea to Trebizond. Through the narrow stream of the Bosphorus (not yet guarded and made illustrious by the New Rome, Constantinople) lay the way to the famous old-world cities of Greece and the temple-crowned islands of the Aegean. Further

<sup>1</sup> 'Tertiâ vero sede super mare Ponticum jam humaniores et, ut superius diximus, prudentiores effecti, divisi per familias populi, Vesegothae familiae Balthorum, Ostrogothae praeclaris Amalis serviebant' (Cap. V). The 'tertiâ sede' alludes to certain migrations into and out of Dacia, which Jordanes (or Cassiodorus) was obliged to invent in order to suit his Gotho-Getic theory, of which more will be said hereafter.

North, on the right (that is the West) of the dwellings of the Visigoths rose the long curving line of the Carpathian mountains. Few were the passes which led between these broad beech-covered highlands; but it was well known to the Visigothic dwellers by the Pruth and the Moldava that those passes led into a Roman land where gold mines<sup>1</sup> and salt mines were worked by chained slave-gangs, where great breadths of cornland filled the valleys, and where stately cities like Apulum and Sarmizegetusa rose by the banks of the Maros or under the shadow of the Carpathians. This land was the province of Dacia, added to the Roman Empire by Trajan, and still forming a part of that Empire, notwithstanding the over-cautious policy of Hadrian, who dismantled the stone bridge which his great predecessor had thrown across the Danube, and who seems to have at one time dallied with the thought of abandoning so precarious an outpost of the Empire.

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CH. 1.

Dacia.

Whatever may have been the original extent of the Dacian province<sup>2</sup>, there can be little doubt that now, at any rate, it comprised only Transylvania and the Western half of Hungary, with so much of Lesser (or Western) Wallachia as was necessary to connect it with

Extent of  
Dacia.

<sup>1</sup> See in the third volume of *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (edited by Mommsen), pp. 924-960, the extremely interesting series of legal instruments inscribed on waxen tablets, which were discovered in the gold mines of Verespatak in Transylvania. The tradition is that some of these tablets were found in a vault filled with a foul and deathlike odour, in which was the form of an old man with long white beard, who crumbled into dust at the opening of the vault (p. 921). The tablets all belong to the period 131-167 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> See on this point a note contributed by me to the *English Historical Review* (vol. ii. pp. 100-103). I follow M. de la Berge (author of an *Essai sur le Règne de Trajan*) in greatly restricting the limits even of Trajan's Dacia.



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CH. I.

the Roman base of operations in Moesia on the Southern bank of the Danube. Any one who looks at the map and sees how Dacia, thus defined, is folded away in the embrace of the Carpathian mountains, will understand why, long after the barbarians on the Lower Danube had begun to move uneasily upon the frontier, the Dacian outpost still preserved its fealty to Rome.

Peace between  
Goths and  
Romans,  
180 (?)—  
240.

For one or two generations the migrated Goths may probably have remained in some sort of peace and friendship with the Roman Empire<sup>1</sup>. The wars with the nations whom they found settled before them in Southern Russia had for a time exhausted their energies, and as Rome was willing to pay to them (as also to others of her barbarian neighbours) subsidies which she called *stipendia*, and which she treated as pay, but the receiver might easily come to look upon as tribute, the Goths on their part were willing to remain quiet, while nursing the hope of an opportunity for proving their prowess in the rich lands beyond the River and the Sea.

The Scythian War,  
241–270.

That opportunity came at last, in the middle of the third century; but the great 'Scythian war,' as it was called, which lasted for a generation and filled the middle years of that century with bloodshed, seems to have been begun, not by the Goths themselves, but by a rival nation. The Carpi, a proud and fierce people, whose dwellings bordered on the Gothic settlement, chafing at the thought that the Goths received yearly

Petrus  
Patricius,  
Excerpt 9.

<sup>1</sup> It is important to observe that in the map known as the *Tabula Peutingeriana* which (except for some subsequent additions) probably assumed its present shape under the Emperors of the house of Severus (A. D. 193–235), no mention is made of the Goths. This is an argument for bringing down their actual invasion of the Empire to as late a period as possible.

*stipendia* from the Empire, while they received none, sent ambassadors to Tullius Menophilus, governor of Lower Moesia under Gordian III<sup>1</sup>, to complain of this inequality and to demand its removal. Menophilus treated the ambassadors with studied insolence. He kept them waiting for days, while he inspected the manœuvres of his troops. When he at length condescended to receive them he was seated on a lofty tribunal, and surrounded by all the tallest soldiers of his legions. To show the ambassadors in how little account he held them, he continually broke in upon their discourse to converse with his staff on subjects foreign to their mission, thus making them feel how infinitely unimportant in his eyes were the affairs of the Carpi. Thus checked and humbled, the ambassadors could only stammer out a feeble remonstrance, 'Why do the Goths receive such large moneys from the Emperor, and we nothing?' 'The Emperor,' said Menophilus, 'is lord of great wealth, and graciously bestows it upon the needy.' 'But we too are in need of his liberality, and we are much better than the Goths.' 'Come again,' said the governor, 'in four months, and I will give you the Emperor's answer.' At the end of four months they came, and were put off for three months more. When they again appeared, Menophilus said, 'The Emperor will give you not a denarius as a matter of bargain, but if you will go to him, fall prostrate before his throne, and humbly beg him for a gift, he may perchance comply with your request.' Sore at heart, but humbled and overawed,

BOOK I.  
CH. I.  
Embassies  
of the Carpi  
to the  
Governor  
of Moesia.  
cir.  
238-240.

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen (History of the Provinces, i. 239, note 2, Eng. transl.) says, 'The administration of Tullius Menophilus is fixed by coins certainly to the time of Gordian, and with probability to 238-240.'



**BOOK I.** the ambassadors left the presence of the haughty  
**CH. I.** governor. They did not venture to the distant court  
 of the dreaded Emperor, and for the three years that  
 Menophilus administered the province they did not  
 dare to break out into insurrection.

The Carpi  
 invade the  
 Empire,  
 241.

At the end of that time it seems that the Carpi took up arms, poured across the Danube into Moesia and destroyed the once flourishing city of Histros (or Istros) at the mouth of the great river<sup>1</sup>. We hear nothing more of this invasion of the Carpi, but soon the Goths too began to move. By this time the confusion in the affairs of the Empire under the men whom I have styled the Barrack Emperors, had become indescribable. Civil war, pestilence, bankruptcy, were all brooding over the doomed land. The soldiers had forgotten how to fight, the rulers how to govern. It seemed as if the effete and unwieldy Empire would break down under its own weight almost before the barbarians were ready to enter into the vacant inheritance.

Philip,  
 Emperor,  
 244-249.

One of the worst of these Barrack Emperors was **PHILIP** the Arabian. He availed himself of his position as Praetorian Prefect to starve the soldiers whom

<sup>1</sup> Julius Capitolinus in his life of Maximus and Balbinus (xvi.), who reigned for a few months of 238, says, 'Sub his pugnatum a Carpis contra Moesos fuit et *Scythici belli principium* et Histriae excidium eo tempore, ut autem Dexippus dicit, Histricae civitatis.' The above-quoted fragment of Petrus Patricius seems to compel us to bring the actual outbreak of war with the Carpi a few years further down than the date assigned by Capitolinus. Ammianus Marcellinus probably alludes to this destruction of Histros, when he calls it 'Histros, quondam potentissima civitas' (xxii. 8. 43). It is clear that Histria and Histrica Civitas of the above quotation, the Histros of Ammianus, the Historius of the Antonine Itinerary, and the Histriopolis of the Tabula Peutingeriana are all different names of the same city, which was twenty-five miles north of Tomi.

the young Emperor Gordian was leading upon an expedition against Persia, and then used the mutiny thus occasioned as a weapon for his master's destruction and a lever for his own elevation to the throne. Having gained the purple by treachery and deceit, he stained it by cowardice and crime. Soon after his accession the Goths began to complain that their annual *stipendia*<sup>1</sup> were being withheld from them, an omission which was probably due, not so much to any deliberate change of policy, as to the utter disorganisation into which the finances of the administration of the Empire had fallen under the indolent Arabian who bore the title of Augustus. This default turned them at once from friends and *foederati* of the Empire into enemies and invaders.

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CH. I.

Under their king *Ostrogotha* (whose name perhaps indicates that the Ostrogothic half of the nation took the lead in this expedition) they crossed the Danube, and devastated Moesia and Thrace. Decius the Senator, a man of stern and austere character, was sent by Philip to repel the invasion. He fought unsuccessfully, and indignant at the slackness of his troops, to whose neglect he attributed the Gothic passage of the Danube, he dismissed large numbers of them from the army as unworthy of the name of soldiers. The disbanded legionaries sought the Gothic camp, and Ostrogotha, who had probably retired across the Danube at the end of his first campaign, formed a new and more powerful

Gothic invasion of the Empire under Ostrogotha.

<sup>1</sup> 'Gothi, ut adsolet, subtracta sibi stipendia sua aegre ferentes, de amicis effecti sunt inimici. Nam quamvis remoti sub regibus viverent suis, reipublicae tamen Romanae foederati erant et annua munera percipiebant' (Jordanes, *De Rebus Geticis*, xvi). This sentence admirably expresses the relations of the barbarian tribes to the Empire, both as friends and foes.

BOOK I. army, consisting of 30,000 Goths, of the Imperial de-  
CH. I. serters, of 3000 Carpi, of Vandals<sup>1</sup>, and Taifali, and

Peucini from the pine-covered island of Peucé at the mouth of the Danube. To the second campaign Ostrogotha did not go forth himself, but sent in his stead two able captains, by name Argaith<sup>2</sup> and Guntheric. Again the barbarians crossed the Danube, again they ravaged Moesia, but, as if this time not mere booty but conquest was their object, they laid formal siege to Marcianople, the great city built by Trajan on the Northern slope of the Balkans, named by him after his sister Marciana, and now represented by the important city of Schumla<sup>3</sup>. But the fierce, irregular onset of the barbarians was ill adapted for the slow, patient, scientific work of taking a Roman city. In their failure to capture Marcianople we have the first of a long series of unsuccessful sieges which we shall meet with in the history of the next three centuries, and which culminated in the great failure of the Ostrogoths to re-capture Rome from Belisarius. On this occasion the Goths received a large sum of money from the inhabitants of the untaken city, and returned to their own land.

Unsuccessful  
siege of  
Marcian-  
ople.

War be-  
tween the  
Goths and  
Gepidae.

For some time the further inroads of the Goths were delayed by a quarrel with the kindred tribe of the Gepidae, the 'Torpids' of the primaeval migration

<sup>1</sup> I think there can be little doubt that the 'Astringi nonnulli,' who are here mentioned by Jordanes, are Vandals of the Asdingian branch.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Argaith is the same person to whom Julius Capitolinus refers in his life of Gordian, iii. (*Historia Augusta*, xxxi): 'Arguntis Scytharum rex finitimorum regna vastabat.'

<sup>3</sup> The site of Marcianople appears to be not actually at Schumla, but at Pravadi, a few miles from it.

from Scandinavia. This tribe, still lagging in the race, had not reached the shores of the Euxine, and were apparently stationed by the upper waters of the Vistula, perhaps in the region which we now call Gallicia<sup>1</sup>. Filled with envy at the successes of the Goths, and dissatisfied with their narrow boundaries, they first made a furious, successful, and almost exterminating raid upon their neighbours, the Burgundians, and then their king Fastida sent to Ostrogotha, saying, 'I am hemmed in with mountains and choked with forests; give me land or meet me in battle.' 'Deeply,' said Ostrogotha, 'as I should regret that tribes so nearly allied as you and we, should meet in impious and fratricidal strife, yet land I neither can nor will give you.' They joined battle 'at the town of Galtis, past which flows the river Auha<sup>2</sup>;' the Gepidae were thoroughly beaten, and Fastida fled humiliated to his home. So many fell in the battle that, as Jordanes hints with a grim smile, 'they no longer found their land too strait for them<sup>3</sup>.'

After this episode the Goths returned to their more

<sup>1</sup> 'Hi ergo Gepidae tacti invidiâ dum Spesis provinciâ commanerent in insulam Visclae amnis vadibus (sic) circumactam, quam patrio sermone dicebant Gepedoios. Nunc eam, ut fertur, insulam gens Vividaria incolit, ipsis ad meliores terras meantibus' (Jord. De Reb. Get. xvii). I have not met with any explanation which throws much light on 'Spesis provincia' or 'gens Vividaria.' Gepedoios no doubt means the Gepid Meadows, and resembles the Oium of Cap. iv. (see p. 41).

<sup>2</sup> Mommsen suggests for Galtis, the Transylvanian Galt (?) on the Aluta. Schafarik (quoted by Hunfalfvy, *Ethnographie von Ungarn*, p. 391) makes the Waag the equivalent of 'fluvius Auha,' and puts the battle in the North-West of Hungary. But it is lost labour trying to make sense of the geography of Jordanes.

<sup>3</sup> 'Crescenti populo dum terras coepit addere, incolas patrios reddidit rariores' (De Rebus Geticis, cap. xvii).



BOOK I. important business, the war with Rome. *Cniva* was  
 CH. 1. now their King, and DECIUS, the general in the  
 Emperor previous campaign, was Emperor of Rome. This man  
 Decius. is unfavourably known to us in ecclesiastical history  
 249-251. as having set on foot one of the fiercest persecutions of  
 the Christians, that namely to which the illustrious  
 Cyprian fell a victim. Yet Decius was no mere tyrant  
 and voluptuary, persecuting and torturing for the sake  
 of a new sensation. He had in him something of the  
 heroic spirit of his great namesakes, the Decii of the  
 Samnite wars. He was willing, even as they had been,  
 to sacrifice himself for the glory of Rome, to which the  
 Goths without and the Christians within were, in his  
 eyes, equally hostile; and his calm readiness to accept  
 death in the discharge of his duty, showed that he  
 shared the heroism of the martyrs whose blood he  
 blindly shed.

Invasion of the Empire by Cniva. 249. King Cniva, with 70,000 of his subjects, crossed the  
 Danube at the place (about thirty-four miles above  
 Rustchuk) which is still called Novo-grad, and was  
 then known as Novae. In his first campaign he  
 fought with varying fortune against Gallus, the duke  
 of Moesia, and Decius<sup>1</sup> the young Caesar, whose father  
 the Emperor appears to have remained at Rome during  
 250 (?) the first year of his reign. Nicopolis<sup>2</sup> was besieged by  
 the Goths, but of course not taken. Still Cniva moved  
 southwards, first lurking in the fastnesses of the Balkans,  
 and afterwards crossing that range and appearing before  
 Philippopolis, now the capital of 'Eastern Roumelia,'  
 then an important city at the intersection of the

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise called Etruscus.

<sup>2</sup> According to Jordanes this was Nicopolis on the river Iatrus, now Nikup.

highways in the Thracian plain. Hither vast numbers of panic-stricken provincials had flocked for refuge, and the Roman generals were naturally anxious to raise the siege. The young Decius led his legions over the rugged passes of the Balkans (a serious barrier to the passage of troops, as the Russian generals found in the campaign of 1877): and having surmounted these he gave his men and horses a few days' rest in the city of Beroa<sup>1</sup>. Here Cniva with his Goths fell upon him like a thunderbolt<sup>2</sup>, inflicted terrible slaughter on the surprised Roman soldiers, and forced Decius to flee with a few followers to Novae, where Gallus with a large and still unshaken host was guarding the Danubian frontier of Moesia.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.  
250.

After this battle the disheartened defenders of Philippopolis soon surrendered it to the barbarians. Vast quantities of treasure were taken, 100,000 of the citizens and refugees (so said the annalists<sup>3</sup>) were massacred within the walls of the city, and, what might have been yet more disastrous for the Empire, Priscus, governor of Macedonia<sup>4</sup> and brother of the late Emperor Philip, having been taken prisoner, was persuaded to assume the Imperial purple, or persuaded the Goths to allow him to do so, and declare himself a rival Augustus to Decius. Thus early in their career were

Capture of  
Philippopolis.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently the Beroa of the Antonine Itinerary, 87 miles North-West of Hadrianople (identified in Smith's Atlas with Eski Saara). Tillemont confuses it with the Macedonian Berea of Acts xvii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> 'Cniva cum Gothis in modum fulminis ruit.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Post clades acceptas inlatas multas et saevas excisa est Philippopolis, centum hominum millibus—*nisi fingunt annales*—intra moenia jugulatis' (Ammianus Marcellinus, xxxi. 5, 17).

<sup>4</sup> 'L. Prisco qui Macedonas Praesidatu regebat' (Aurelius Victor de Caes. 29).



BOOK I. the Goths resorting to the expedient of creating an  
CH. 1. Anti-Emperor<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>250.</sup>  
Decius the  
Emperor  
appears on  
the scene.

The proclamation of Priscus and the tidings of the Gothic successes drew the Emperor Decius to the scene of action. He probably left Rome at the end of the year 250 or the beginning of 251; and the persecution of the Christians seems to have abated somewhat on his departure. Priscus, who had been declared a public enemy by the Senate, was soon killed, and for a time the Gothic campaign went prosperously for the Empire. In the North, Gallus, 'duke of the frontier,' collected the troops from Novae and Oiscus<sup>2</sup> (each the depôt of a legion) into a powerful army. In the South the Emperor provided for the safety of the rich and still unviolated province of Achaia by sending a brave young officer named Claudius to hold the pass of Thermopylae against the invaders, should they turn their steps southward<sup>3</sup>. While the Romans gained confidence

Jordanes,  
De Reb.  
Get. xviii.

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph and its predecessor (which, as will be seen, differ considerably from the corresponding one in the previous edition) are the result of an attempt to combine the conflicting narratives of Jordanes (*De Reb. Get.* xviii) and Aurelius Victor (*loc. cit.*). I follow Tillemont in making the young Decius, not his father, the general in this campaign. Clinton (*Fasti Romani*, 250) holds the same view.

<sup>2</sup> At Novae, as we learn from the Antonine Itinerary, was stationed the First Legion (*Italica*): at Oiscus (about sixty miles further up the Danube) the Fifth Legion (*Macedonica*).

<sup>3</sup> We learn this fact from the Augustan History. Trebellius Pollio, near the end of the life of Claudius, quotes an interesting letter from Decius to Messala, the Praeses of Achaia, in which the above commission is stated to have been given to 'Tribunus Claudius, optimus juvenis, fortissimus miles, constantissimus civis, castris, Senatui et Reipublicae necessarius,' and Messala is directed to furnish him with 200 soldiers from the district of Dardania, 100 soldiers clad in mail (*cataphractarii*), 160 horsemen, 60 Cretan bowmen, and 1000 well-armed recruits.

from the arrival of the Emperor, the Goths, to whom even their victories had been costly, and who were perhaps demoralised by the sack of Philippopolis, lost theirs. They found themselves hard pressed by Decius, and offered, we are told, to relinquish all their captives and all their spoil if they might be allowed to return in peace to their own land. Decius refused their request, and ordered Gallus and his army to obstruct the line of their homeward march, while he himself pursued them from behind. If we may trust a Roman historian<sup>1</sup> (which is doubtful, since a beaten army is always ready with the cry of treachery), Gallus, already coveting the Imperial crown, opened negotiations with the barbarians, and these by a concerted arrangement posted themselves near a very deep swamp, into which by a feigned flight they drew Decius and his troops. The Romans, floundering in the bog, soon became a disorderly multitude. Moreover, at this critical period, the younger Decius fell, pierced by a Gothic arrow. The troops offered their rough and hasty sympathy to the bereaved father, who answered with stoical calmness, 'Let no one be cast down: the loss of one soldier is no serious injury to the State.' He himself soon after perished<sup>2</sup>. With a vast multitude of his officers and men, he was sucked in by that fatal swamp, and not even his corpse, nor those of thousands of his followers, were ever recovered.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

251.

Defeat and  
death of  
Decius.

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, copied by Zonaras.

<sup>2</sup> The language both of Jordanes and Aurelius Victor, who are our most circumstantial witnesses as to this battle, seems to point to an interval of some time between the deaths of the son and the father. And yet it is not easy to reconcile this with the account of the battle given by Zosimus. Perhaps there were two engagements on the same day and at the same place.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

251.

The date of this disastrous battle can be fixed with considerable certainty in the last days of the month of November, 251<sup>1</sup>. The place was (says Jordanes) 'Abrittus, a city of Moesia<sup>2</sup>,' the site of which has yet to be discovered, but which was probably somewhere in the marshy ground near the mouth of the Danube. It is interesting to note that the Gothic historian says that 'even to his day it was still called Ara Decii, because there, before the battle, the Emperor had miserably offered sacrifice to his idols.'

Import-  
ance of this  
event.

The death of a Roman Emperor and the loss of his army in battle with barbarians from out of the Scythian wilderness was an event which sent a shudder through the whole Roman world, and raised new and wild hopes in all the nations that swarmed around the long circumference of the Empire. There were three great disasters in the course of four centuries which seemed to indicate that the rule of Rome over the world might not be so eternal as the legends upon her medals and the verses of her poets declared to be its destiny. The first was the defeat of Varus and his legions in the *Saltus Teutoburgiensis*; the second was this catastrophe of Decius in the marshes of the Dobrudscha; the third was the similar calamity which will be described in a future chapter, and which befell the Emperor Valens on the plains of Hadrianople.

A. D. 9.

A. D. 251.

A. D. 378.

Return of  
the Goths  
across the  
Danube.

For the time however the actual danger of invasion from the Goths was at an end. These barbarians were still bent on plunder rather than on conquest, and being

<sup>1</sup> See the proof of this in Tillemont, *Histoire des Empereurs*, iii. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Otherwise called *Forum Thembronii* or *Terebronii*, but this is also unknown.

intent on returning to their Scythian homes with the spoil of Thrace, they condescended to fulfil the compact which they had made—if indeed they had made it—with Gallus, late duke of Moesia and now wearer of the purple and lord of the Roman world. The terms of the treaty were that they should return to their own land with all their booty, with the multitude of captives, many of them men of noble birth, whom they had taken at Philippopolis and elsewhere, and that the Emperor should pay them a certain sum of money every year. This yearly payment might be treated, according to the nationality of the speaker, as a mere renewal of the *Stipendia* of previous years (no doubt greatly increased in amount) or as an actual tribute paid by the Roman Augustus to the Gothic king.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

251.

Zosimus,  
i. 24.

However, even this ignominiously purchased peace with the barbarians was of short duration. The time was one of the darkest in all that dark century; Emperors were rising and falling in rapid succession (GALLUS 251, AEMILIAN 253, VALERIAN 254); a terrible pestilence which was to last fifteen years, bred in Ethiopia, had stalked down the valley of the Nile and was wasting the Asiatic and Illyrian provinces, and on the Eastern frontier the never-long-slumbering hostility of the Persian king was arousing itself for a fresh attack on the exhausted Empire. It was apparently during these disasters that the Goths crossed the Carpathians, and finally wrested Dacia from her Roman rulers, though this important event, recorded by no historian, can only be inferred by us from the sudden cessation of Roman inscriptions and coins in Dacia about this time<sup>1</sup>.

252-267.

Loss of  
Dacia

about 255.

<sup>1</sup> See Mommsen (Röm. Gesch. v. 220). 'While Aemilian was con-



BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Maritime  
expedi-  
tions.  
258-262.

Zosimus,  
i. 31.

But the chief feature of the 'Scythian war' which soon followed, and one which brings the Goths before us in a new capacity, as the forerunners of our own Saxon and Scandinavian forefathers, was its *maritime* character. The Scythians (under which generic name we have to include, not the Goths only, but also the Carpi, Heruli, and other neighbouring tribes) seem to have pressed down to the sea-shore and compelled the Roman and Greek settlers in the Crimea, by the mouth of the Dnieper and along the shores of the Sea of Azof, to supply them with ships, sailors, and pilots, for buccaneering expeditions against the lands on the other side of the misty Euxine. The chronology of these events is difficult and obscure, and it will not be desirable to attempt to discuss it here, but the main outline of the four chief expeditions may be sketched as follows. I shall use the generic name 'Scythians,' which I find in our Greek authorities, without attempting in each case to say what was the share taken in them by the Goths, properly so called, and what that of their allies<sup>1</sup>.

quering Gallus in Italy, and shortly afterwards succumbing to that Emperor's general, Valerian (254), Dacia, how and through whom we know not, was lost to the Empire. (Perhaps the invasion of the Marcomanni mentioned by Zosimus, i. 29, has something to do with this.) The latest coin struck in the Province, and the latest inscription found there date from the year 255: the latest coin of the neighbouring Viminacium in Upper Moesia, from the following year. Consequently in the earliest years of Valerian and Gallienus the barbarians possessed themselves of the Roman territory on the left bank of the Danube, and were pressing on to the right bank also.'

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus (i. 29-46), the *Historia Augusta* (Life of Gallienus) and the fragments of Dexippus, are our chief authorities for these Scythian inroads. It is remarkable how little is said about them by Jordanes, who devotes to them only one short chapter in his history (*De Reb. Get. xx*).

The first voyage of these new barbarian Argonauts was made to a city of that same Colchis from which Jason brought back Medea and the Golden Fleece. Pityus (*Soukoum Kaleh*), at the eastern end of the Euxine, once a flourishing Greek city, had been destroyed by Caucasian highlanders, and rebuilt by the Romans, and was now surrounded by a very strong wall and in the possession of a splendid harbour. The Roman governor, Successianus, made a spirited defence, and the barbarians after sustaining severe loss were compelled to retire. Upon this the Emperor Valerian promoted Successianus to the high, the almost royal dignity of Praetorian Prefect, and removed him to Antioch that he might assist him in rebuilding that city (ruined by the Persians) and in preparing for a fresh campaign against the Persian king. Apparently the loss of one man's courage and skill was fatal to the defenders of Pityus: for when the barbarians, having made a feigned attack on another part of the coast, rapidly returned, they took that stronghold without difficulty. The ships in the harbour and the sailors impressed into the Scythian service smoothed their way to further successes. The great city of Trapezuntium (*Trebizond*), on the southern shore of the Black Sea, being surrounded by a double wall and strongly garrisoned, might have been expected to prove an insuperable obstacle. But the Scythians, who had discovered that the defenders of the city kept a lax watch, and passed their time in feasting and drunkenness, quietly collected a quantity of wood which they heaped up one night against the lowest part of the walls, and so mounted to an easy conquest. The demoralised Roman soldiers poured out of the city by the gate opposite to that by

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Siege of  
Pityus  
258 (?)

and Trape-  
zuntium.



BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

258.

which the Scythians were entering. The barbarians thus came into possession of an untold quantity of gold and captives, and, after sacking the temple and wrecking the stateliest of the public buildings, returned by sea to their own land.

Bithynia  
invaded.  
259.

Their success stimulated a large neighbouring tribe of Scythians to undertake a similar enterprise. These, however, dreading the uncertainties of the navigation of the Euxine, marched by land from the mouths of the Danube to the little lake of Philea, about thirty miles north-west of Byzantium. There they found a large population of fishermen, whom they compelled to render them the same service with their boats which the men by the Sea of Azof had rendered to their countrymen. Guided by a certain Chrysogonus, whose Grecian name suggests that he was a deserter from the cause of civilisation, they sailed boldly through the Bosphorus, wrested the strong position of Chalcedon at its mouth from a cowardly Roman army far superior to them in numbers, and then proceeded to lay waste at their leisure Nicomedeia, Nicaea, and other rich cities of Bithynia. The men who had overcome so many difficulties were, after all, stopped by the Rhyndacus, an apparently inconsiderable stream which falls into the Sea of Marmora. Retracing their steps, therefore, they tranquilly burned all the Bithynian cities which they had hitherto only plundered, and piling their vast heaps of spoil on waggons and on ships, they returned to their own land.

The Baths  
of Anchia-  
lus.

The foregoing account of this inroad of the barbarians is given to us by Zosimus the Greek historian. The Goth Jordanes, whose historical perspective is not extremely accurate, informs us that

during the expedition 'they also sacked Troy and Ilium, which were just beginning to breathe again for a little space after that sad war with Agamemnon<sup>1</sup>.' But neither Chalcedon nor Troy seems to have imprinted itself so deeply in the barbarian memory as a certain town in Thrace named Anchialus (*Bourghaz*), built just where the range of the Balkans slopes down into the Euxine Sea. For at or near to Anchialus 'there were certain warm springs renowned above all others in the world for their healing virtues, and greatly did the Goths delight to wash therein.' One can imagine the children of the North, after the fatigue of sacking so many towns, beneath the hot sun of Asia Minor, rejoicing in the refreshment of these nature-heated baths. 'And having tarried there many days they thence returned home.'

BOOK I.  
CH. I.  
259.

The tidings of these ravages reached the Emperor Valerian at Antioch, where he was still engaged in deliberating whether he should arrest the onward movement of the Persians by war or diplomacy. Sending a trusted counsellor, Felix, to repair the fortifications of Byzantium, in the hope of thus making a repetition of the Scythian raids impossible, Valerian at length marched eastwards against the king of Persia. He marched to his own destruction, to the treachery of Macrianus, to the fatal interview with Sapor, to his long and ignominious captivity at Persepolis. The story which was current fifty years later, that the haughty Persian used the captive Emperor as a horse-block, putting his foot on Valerian's neck when-

Calamitous  
Persian  
campaign  
of Vale-  
rian.

260.

260-265.

<sup>1</sup> 'Vastantes in itinere suo Trojam Iliumque, quae, vix a bello illo Agamemnoniaco aliquantulum respirantes, rursus hostili mucrone deletae sunt' (De Rebus Geticis, xx).

BOOK I. ever he mounted his steed, and remarking with a sneer  
 CH. 1. that this was a real triumph, and not like the imaginary triumphs which the Romans painted on their walls, may have been the rhetorical invention of a later age: but it seems beyond question that the aged Emperor was treated with studied insolence and severity, and that when he died, his skin, painted in mockery the colour of Imperial purple, was preserved, a ghastly trophy, in the temple of Persepolis.

Reign of Gallienus, 260-268. His son GALLIENUS, who had been associated with him in the Empire, and whose right to rule was challenged by usurpers in almost every province of the Empire<sup>1</sup>, was a man of excellent abilities, but absolutely worthless character, a *poco-curante* on the throne of the world at a time when all the strength and all the earnestness of the greatest of the Caesars would hardly have sufficed for that arduous position. Gallienus accepted both his father's captivity and the Empire's dismemberment with flippant serenity. 'Egypt,' said one of his ministers, 'has revolted.' 'What of that? Cannot we dispense with Egyptian flax?' 'Fearful earthquakes have happened in Asia Minor, and the Scythians are ravaging all the country.' 'But cannot we do without Lydian saltpetre?' When Gaul was lost, he gave a merry laugh, and said, 'Do you think the Republic will be in danger if the Consul's robes cannot be made of the Gaulish tartan?'

Expedition to Ephesus, 262 or 263. Two or three years after the commencement of the captivity of Valerian, a third expedition of the Scythians, which must have been partly maritime, brought the barbarians to another well-known spot, to the Ionic city of Ephesus, where they signalled their sojourn by the

<sup>1</sup> The so-called Thirty Tyrants.

destruction of that magnificent Temple of Diana, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, of whose hundred marble columns, wreathed round by sculptured figures in high relief, an English explorer<sup>1</sup> has lately discovered the pathetically defaced ruins.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

262-3.

But a holier shrine of art than even Ephesus was to be visited by the unwelcome pilgrimage of the Teutons. Four or five years later some warriors of the Herulian tribe (accompanied possibly by some of the Goths properly so called), with a fleet which is said to have consisted of five hundred ships—if they should not rather be called mere boats—sailed again through the Bosphorus, took Byzantium, ravaged some of the islands of the Archipelago, and landing in Greece, wasted not only Corinth, Sparta, and Argos, but even Athens herself, with fire and sword. The soft and cultured Athenians, lately immersed in the friendly rivalries of their professors of rhetoric, and who had not for centuries seen a spear thrown in anger, were terrified by the apparition of these tall, gaunt, skin-clothed barbarians under their walls<sup>2</sup>. They abandoned their beautiful city without a struggle, and as many as could do so escaped to the *demes*, the little villages scattered along the heights of Hymettus and Cithaeron. It was

The barbarians at Athens.  
267.

Georgius Syncellus,  
p. 282 (ed. Paris).

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. T. Wood (*Discoveries at Ephesus*; London, 1877).

<sup>2</sup> Herzberg gives us an admirable, if imaginary, picture of the condition of Athens at this time:—

‘The streets and squares which at other times were enlivened only by the noisy crowds of the ever-restless citizens, and of the students who flocked thither from all parts of the Graeco-Roman world, now resounded with the dull roar of the German bull-horns and the war-cry of the Goths. Instead of the red cloak of the Sophists, and the dark hoods of the Philosophers, the skin-coats of the barbarians fluttered in the breeze. Wodan and Donar had gotten the victory over Zeus and Athene’ (*Geschichte Griechenlands*, iii. 170).



BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

267.

Zonaras,  
xii. 26.

probably during the occupation of Athens by the barbarians which followed this surrender that a characteristic incident occurred. A troop of Teutonic warriors roaming through the city in search of something to destroy, came to one of the great libraries which were the glory of Athens. They began to carry out the parchment rolls, full of unintelligible learning, and to pile them up in a great heap, intending to behold a magnificent bonfire. 'Not so, my sons,' said a gray-bearded Gothic veteran; 'leave these scrolls untouched, that the Greeks may in time to come, as they have in time past, waste their manhood in poring over their wearisome contents. So will they ever fall, as now, an easy prey to the strong unlearned sons of the North.'

Valour of  
Dexippus.

That the Gothic veteran spoke only a half-truth when he uttered these words was soon shown by the valiant and wisely planned onset, which was made upon the barbarians by Dexippus, rhetorician, philosopher, and historian, who at the head of only 2000 men, co-operating apparently with an Imperial fleet, succeeded in expelling the barbarians from Athens, and to some extent effaced the stigma which their recent cowardice had brought upon the name of the Greeks. Details as to the siege and counter-siege are alike wanting, but we still have the speech, truly said to be not altogether unworthy of a place in the pages of Thucydides, in which the soldier-sophist, while cautioning his followers against rash and unsupported skirmishes, breathes a high heroic spirit into their hearts, and appeals to them to show themselves fit inheritors of the great traditions of their forefathers. 'Thus shall we win from men now living, and from those who are yet to be, the meed of ever-to-be-remembered glory,

Excerpta  
e Dexippo,  
5 & 6 (pp.  
22-28, ed.  
Bonn).

proving in very deed that even in the midst of our calamities the old spirit of the Athenians is not abated. Let us therefore set our children and all our dearest ones upon the hazard of this battle for which we now array ourselves, calling upon the all-seeing gods to be our helpers.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

267.

'When they heard these words, the Athenians were greatly strengthened, and begged him to lead them on to battle,' in which, as has been already said, they appear to have won a complete victory.

Gallienus himself appears to have had some share in a further discomfiture of the Heruli, which was followed by the surrender of their leader Naulobates, who entered the Imperial service and obtained the dignity of a Roman Consul. But the Emperor was soon recalled to Italy by the news that his general Aureolus had assumed the purple, apparently in the city of Milan. Gallienus hastened thither and began the siege of the city, which lasted some months. Before its close, Aureolus, who found himself hard pressed, succeeded in forming a conspiracy among the officers of Gallienus, which ended in the assassination of that prince while he was engaged in repelling a sortie of the besieged.

Civil war  
and death  
of Gallie-  
nus, 268.  
Georg.  
Syncellus,  
p. 382.

The Roman world again awoke to hopefulness when the reign of the Imperial voluptuary was ended, and when out of the nightmare-dream of plots, assassinations, and civil wars, the strong and brave Illyrian soldier Claudius, who had already borne a leading part in the defence of Moesia, emerged as sole ruler of the Empire<sup>1</sup>. Aureolus was defeated and put to death; the Alamanni, who from the lands of the Main and the

Claudius  
II, Em-  
peror,  
268-270.

<sup>1</sup> Virtually sole ruler. But Tetricus in Gaul and Zenobia at Palmyra remained to be conquered by Claudius.



BOOK I. Neckar had penetrated into Italy as far as the Lake of  
CH. 1. Garda and menaced Verona were vanquished, and half

269.

Levy en  
masse of  
the bar-  
barians.

Rome in restoring peace to the troubled state, Claudius turned his steps towards his own native Illyricum, in order to rescue that portion of the Empire from the avalanche of barbarism, which was thundering over it. It was indeed time for Rome to put forth her whole strength. The Goths with all their kindred tribes were pouring themselves upon Thrace and Macedonia in vaster numbers than ever. The previous movement of these nations had been probably but robber-inroads; this was a national immigration. The number of the ships (or skiffs) which they prepared on the river Dniester, is stated by Zosimus at 6000. This is probably an exaggeration or an accidental corruption of the historian's text; but 2000, which is the figure given by Ammianus, is a sufficiently formidable number, even of the small craft to which the estimate refers. And the invading host itself, including doubtless camp-followers and slaves, perhaps some women and children, is said, with a concurrence of testimony which we dare not disregard, to have reached the enormous total of 320,000.

Invasion  
by land  
and by sea.

In order to obtain any sense from the conflicting accounts of this campaign, we must suppose<sup>1</sup> that this vast Gothic horde made their attack partly by sea and partly by land<sup>2</sup>. While the 2000 ships sailed over the Euxine, and, after vainly attacking Tomi, Marcianople,

<sup>1</sup> With Herzberg, iii. 184-5.

<sup>2</sup> The history of Zosimus deals *chiefly* with the maritime invaders, the life of Claudius in the *Historia Augusta* with those who came by land.

and Byzantium, traversed the swift Bosphorus, and again sought the pleasant islands of the Aegean, the rest of the host, with women and children, with wag-gons and camp-followers, must have crossed the Danube and pressed southwards across the devastated plains of Moesia. The sea-rovers, who had suffered from storms and from collisions in the narrow waters of the Sea of Marmora, reached at length, in diminished numbers, the promontory of Athos, and there repaired their ships. They then proceeded to besiege the cities of Cassandreia (once better known under the name of Potidaea) and of Thessalonica. Strong as were the fortifications of the latter important city, it would perhaps have yielded to the barbarians, had not tidings reached them that Claudius was in Moesia, and that their brethren of the Northern army were in danger<sup>1</sup>. After a skirmish in the valley of the Vardar in which they lost 3000 men, they crossed the Balkans and, perhaps uniting with their Northern brethren, gathered round the army of Claudius who was ascending the valley of the Morava and had reached the city of Naissus<sup>2</sup>. The battle which followed looked at first like a Roman defeat. After great slaughter on both sides the Imperial troops gave way, but coming back by unfrequented paths, they fell upon the barbarians in all the joy of their victory, and slew of them 50,000 men. After this defeat the sea-rovers seem to have returned to their ships, and abandoning the siege of Thessalonica, to have wasted their energies in desultory attacks on Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus; but partly from the ravages of the plague which was at this time desolating the

BOOK I.  
CH. I  
—  
269.

Battle of  
Naissus.

Return of  
the sea-  
rovers.

<sup>1</sup> This is a conjectural amplification of the language of Zosimus.

<sup>2</sup> Nissa or Nisch, in Servia.

BOOK I. shores of the Levant, and partly from the energetic  
CH. I. attack of the Alexandrian fleet under the command of  
269. the valiant officer Probus (afterwards Emperor), they  
suffered so severely that they were obliged to return  
home having done no memorable deed.

Blockade  
and sur-  
render of  
the land-  
army of the  
barbarians,  
270.

As to their brethren of the land army, they made  
a rampart of their waggons, behind which for some  
time they kept the Romans at bay. They then turned  
southwards into Macedonia, but so great was the pres-  
sure of hunger upon them that they killed and ate the  
cattle that drew the waggons, thus abandoning their  
last chance of returning to their northern homes. The  
Roman cavalry shut them up into the passes of the  
Balkans; the too eager infantry attacking them were  
repulsed with some loss. Claudius, or the generals  
whom he had left in command, resumed the waiting  
game, and at length after the barbarians had endured  
the horrors of a winter among the Balkan fastnesses,  
aggravated by the miseries of the pestilence, which  
raged there as well as in the islands of the Aegean, their  
stout Gothic hearts were broken and they surrendered  
themselves unconditionally to their conqueror.

Claudius'  
bulletin.

It was in the following words, whose boastfulness  
seems to have been almost justified by the facts, that  
Claudius, who received the surname Gothicus in cele-  
bration of his victory, announced the issue of the cam-  
paign to the governor of Illyricum:—

Historia  
Augusta,  
Vita Clau-  
dii, viii.

‘Claudius to Brocchus.—We have destroyed 320,000  
of the Goths; we have sunk 2000 of their ships. The  
rivers are bridged over with shields; with swords and  
lances all the shores are covered. The fields are hidden  
from sight under the superincumbent bones; no road  
is free from them; an immense encampment of wag-

gons is deserted. We have taken such a number of BOOK I.  
CH. I. women that each soldier can have two or three concubines allotted to him.'

Of the males in the diminished remnant of the Gothic army who were admitted to quarter, some probably entered the service of their vanquisher as *foederati*, and many remained as slaves to plough the fields which they had once hoped to conquer for their own.

But the terrible pestilence, which more than the Death of  
Claudius,  
270. Roman sword had defeated the armies of the barbarians, intensified by the unburied corpses strewn over the desolated land, entered the Roman camp and demanded the noblest of the host as a victim. In the spring of 270 Claudius Gothicus died, having reigned only two memorable years. He was succeeded<sup>1</sup> by another brave Illyrian, like himself of humble origin, the well-known conqueror of Zenobia, AURELIAN. This Emperor, Aurelian,  
270-275. of whose exploits when still only a tribune marvellous stories were told, who was reported to have slain in one day eight-and-forty Sarmatians, and in the course of a campaign nine hundred and fifty; this soldier who had been so fond of his weapons and so quick to use them that his surname in the army had been 'Hand-on-sword,' distinguished himself in the history of the Empire by a wise stroke of peaceful policy, the final abandonment of Dacia.

This province, which ever since the Marcomannic war Final abandon-  
ment of  
Dacia. at the close of the second century had been a precarious possession of the Empire, had now been for fifteen years freely traversed by the Goths and their kindred tribes. Aurelian saw that the energies of the State

<sup>1</sup> After an interval of a few months, during which Quintillus, brother of Claudius, wore the purple.



BOOK I. would be over-taxed in the endeavour to retain an  
CH. I. isolated outwork such as Dacia had ever been, and that

Hist.  
Augusta,  
Vita Au-  
reliani,  
xxxix.

it would be wiser to make the Lower Danube once more the limit of the Empire in this quarter. Details are unfortunately not given us as to the manner in which the Romans relinquished Dacia. Had they been preserved, they would probably have furnished an interesting commentary on the yet more obscure abandonment of Britain a century and a half later. But we are told that 'the Emperor withdrew his army and left Dacia to the provincials' (a strange expression for the new comers from Scythia) 'despairing of being able to retain it, and the peoples led forth from thence he settled in Moesia, and made there a province which he called his own Dacia, and which now divides the two Moesias' (Superior and Inferior). This new 'Dacia of Aurelian,' a curious attempt to gloss over the real loss of a province, consisted of the eastern half of Servia and the western end of Bulgaria, and was eventually divided into two smaller provinces, *Dacia Ripensis* whose capital was the strong city of Ratiaria on the Danube, and *Dacia Mediterranea* whose capital Sardica became famous in the fourth century as the seat of an Ecclesiastical Council, and under its modern name of Sofia is now again famous as the modern capital of Bulgaria.

In abandoning the old trans-Danubian Dacia to the Goths, Aurelian may probably have made some sort of stipulation with them that they should not again cross the great river, nor sail the Euxine Sea as enemies to Rome<sup>1</sup>. The recession of the Imperial frontier, by

<sup>1</sup> I do not think we have authority for stating the bargain between Aurelian and the Goths so precisely as I did in the first edition

whatever conditions it was accompanied, was undoubtedly a piece of real statesmanship. Could a similar policy have been pursued, cautiously and consistently, all round the frontiers of the Roman Empire, it is allowable to conjecture that that Empire, though in somewhat less than its widest circumference, might still be standing.

After the reign of Aurelian the Goths remained for nearly a century on terms of peace, though not unbroken peace, with Rome. The skirmishes or battles which caused the Emperors TACITUS and PROBUS to put 'Victoria Gothica' on their coins<sup>1</sup>, and in right of which DIOCLETIAN and MAXIMIAN added 'Gothici' to their other proud titles of conquest, were probably but the heaving of the waves after the great tempest of Gothic invasion had ceased to blow. In the Civil War between CONSTANTINE and LICINIUS, Gothic *foederati* fought under the banners of Constantine, and at a later period of his reign 40,000 of the same auxiliaries under their kings *Ariaric* and *Aoric* followed the Roman eagles on various expeditions<sup>2</sup>. But Constantine himself, intervening in some quarrel between the Goths and their Sarmatian [Slavonic] neighbours, took part

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

A century  
of compara-  
tive peace,  
270-367.

Tacitus,  
275-276.  
Probus,  
276-282.  
Diocletian,  
284-305.

314.

(p. 62). As far as our authorities go, we can only state positively Aurelian's abandonment of Dacia, and infer the Gothic promise of tranquillity. The negotiations which Gibbon has described, on the authority of Dexippus, were evidently made with the Vandals, and must not be transferred to the Goths.

<sup>1</sup> Akerman's Roman Coins, ii. 101. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes tries to connect his nation in some way with the foundation of Constantinople. 'Nam et ut famosissimam et Romae aemulam in suo nomine conderet civitatem, Gothorum interfuit operatio, qui foedere inito cum imperatore quadraginta suorum millia illi in solatia contra gentes varias obtulere, quorum et numerus et militia usque ad praesens in republicâ nominatur, id est foederati, (De Reb. Get. xxi).



BOOK I.  
CH. I.

with the latter, and conducted operations against the Goths, which are said to have caused the death of near 100,000 of their number from cold and hunger. Hostages were then given by the defeated barbarians, among them the son of king Ariaric, and the usual friendly relations between the Goths and the Empire were resumed<sup>1</sup>.

Restora-  
tion of the  
Empire by  
the Illyrian  
Emperors.

These hundred years of nearly uninterrupted peace may have been caused partly by the exhaustion resulting from the invasions in the reign of Gallienus and the remembrance of the terrible defeat which the Goths had sustained at the hands of Claudius. Some increasing softness of manners and some power of appreciating the blessings of civilisation, the result of their intercourse with Roman provincials on both sides of the Danube, may have contributed to the same result. But doubtless the main reason for this century of peace was the greatly increased strength of the Empire, precisely upon her Danubian frontier. After the wars of Gallienus a series of brave and capable Illyrian soldiers mounted the throne. Not only Claudius, but Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius, Constantine, all deduced their origin from Illyricum. Some of these men had risen to eminence in the terrible Gothic struggle. All of them, with eyes quickened by affection for their own fatherland, saw the necessity of strengthening this middle section of the Empire's long line of defence. It was in order to be near the vital point which the Scythian marauders had penetrated that Diocletian took up his abode at the Bithynian city of Nicomedia. It was in continuation

<sup>1</sup> We get these details chiefly from the important fragment known as Anonymus Valesii.

of the same policy and by one of the highest inspirations of statesmanship that the world has witnessed, that Constantine planted his new Rome beside the Bosphorus. Thus the Scythian invasions, the history of which we have been labouring to recover from the discordant fragments of the chroniclers, hold a prominent position among the causes which have brought about the endless 'Eastern Question' of to-day. And, without doubt, as the terrible Gothic invasions contributed to the foundation of Constantinople, so the foundation of that city and the transference of so much of the strength of the Empire from the Tiber to the Golden Horn, had the effect of striking terror and despair into the hearts of the barbarians on the northern shore of the Euxine, and had much to do with the century of comparative peace between 'Gothia' and 'Romania.'

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Of this period of Gothic sojourn in Dacia we have one interesting relic in the celebrated Buzeu Ring<sup>1</sup>. This is a golden arm-ring, elastic and snake-shaped, and is part of a large treasure of golden ornaments found at Buzeu in Little Wallachia, in the year 1838. Upon the flat surface of the ring is carved, or rather stamped with a hammer and a sharp instrument, the following Runic inscription :

The Buzeu  
Ring.

× ʌ ↑ ʃ † | ʒ ʀ | H ʃ | ʀ ʃ ×

equivalent to—

GUTÆNIOWI HÆILÆG,

which may be translated either 'Holy to the Temple of

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes called the Petrossa ring, Petrossa being the nearest town to the place of discovery, or the Bucharest ring, from its being now deposited in the Museum at Bucharest. See description in Stephens' Runic Monuments, ii. 571, iii. 265.

BOOK I. the Goths,' or 'Holy to the new Temple of the Goths'.  
 CH. I.

There is some little difficulty about the middle part of the inscription, but none as to its beginning and end, which are admitted to contain the name of the Gothic people and the Teutonic adjective for 'holy.' From the heathen character of the inscription it must be referred to a pretty early period in the Gothic occupation of Dacia, say between 250 and 350. It has been suggested<sup>2</sup> that 'the great intrinsic value of the gold, forming the Buzeu hoard, points to the dedication of the spoils of some great triumph—the plunder, it may be, of the camp of Decius, or the ransom of the wealthy city of Marcianople.' But this is of course mere conjecture.

Civilisa-  
 tion of the  
 Visigoths  
 through  
 their resi-  
 dence in  
 Dacia.

One result of the settlement in Dacia was probably to broaden the line of demarcation between the two nations of the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths, if indeed it did not (as might be argued with some probability) for the first time divide the Gothic people into those two sections. Everything in the story of the barbarian migrations shows us how powerful was the moral, we might almost say the spiritual, influence, exercised by the stately fabric of Roman civilisation upon the barbarians who

'With straitened habits and with tastes starved small'<sup>3</sup>  
 came to burrow in its abandoned chambers. True,

<sup>1</sup> Professor Odobescu (in a monograph on Trajan's Column quoted in the *Archaeological Review*, iv. 51-56) reads GUTANI OCVI HAILAG, and translates: 'To Gutan [=Wodan] Scythia is dedicated.' He quotes Jordanes (*De Reb. Get.* iv), 'Pervenit ad Scythiae terras, quae linguâ eorum Oium [al. 'Ocum' vel 'Ovim'] vocabantur.' But this seems to give an improbable rendering. We await further light on the question.

<sup>2</sup> By Isaac Taylor in his *Greeks and Goths*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Browning, *Epistle of Karshish*.

Aurelian had invited all the old inhabitants who chose to do so to leave the old Dacia and become settlers in his new Dacia south of the Danube, but many probably did not accept the invitation, and in any event there was much Roman which could not migrate. The great roads, the cities, the mines, the baths, the camps, the temples remained, to impress, to fascinate, to attract the minds of the barbarians. Legends of the mysterious people who had wrought these mighty works, tales of vast treasure-hoards, guarded by dwarfs or by serpents, would be told by Gothic mothers to their children. In some cases the ruined Roman city would be shunned as a dwelling-place by the Teutonic settlers, oppressed by a nameless fear of the spirits that might be haunting the spot. But even so, their own rude town would inevitably grow up near to the ancient *civitas*, for the sake of the roads which led to it. The experience of all other German settlements within the limits of the Empire warrants us in asserting *à priori* that the influence of their settlement in Dacia must have been a civilising one on the Gothic warriors, that it must have instilled into them a certain dissatisfaction with their own dull, unprogressive Past, and must have prepared their minds to admire, and in some measure to desire, the great intellectual heritage of Rome. And, *à posteriori*, we find precisely in the Visigothic nation a capacity for culture and for assimilation with their Roman subjects, greater and earlier than that possessed by any other of the barbarian invaders of the Empire; and we are surely entitled to assume that the century passed in Roman Dacia had something to do with this result.

But it is the Visigothic branch alone of which we



BOOK I.  
CH. I.

The Ostrogoths probably remained unchanged.

may think as thus silently transformed by Roman influences. The Ostrogoths, dwelling in the vast plains of Lithuania and Southern Russia, had no such trophies of civilisation around them as those which met the gaze of their Western brethren. Some little civilising influence may have been exerted upon the coast-dwellers and the inhabitants of the Crimea by the Greek cities that were scattered helplessly among them: but the greater part of the Ostrogothic people, having been 'Scythians' of the steppes for centuries, remained Scythians still, barbarous, illiterate, untouched by the intellectual superiority of Rome.

Kings of the Goths.

As far, however, as we can trace anything of the political system of the Goths at this period, the less cultured part of the nation maintained a sort of ascendancy over their Visigothic brethren. The kings, Ariaric and Aoric, whom we have met with as fighting for or against the Emperor Constantine, may have belonged to either section. The reign of the next king, *Geberic*, was chiefly distinguished by a successful attack on the Vandals, whom he drove out from their settlements on the western border of Dacia, and forced to take shelter under the Roman supremacy in the province of Pannonia. Geberic also may have been either Visigoth or Ostrogoth, though there is something in the way in which his name is introduced by Jordanes which seems to make the latter the more probable supposition. But

Geberic.

circa 337.

De Reb. Get. xxii.

Hermanric the Ostrogoth.

after Geberic we come to 'Hermanric, noblest of the Amals, who subdued many warlike nations of the North and forced them to obey his laws,' and here we are undoubtedly upon Ostrogothic ground. Jordanes compares him to Alexander the Great, and enumerates thirteen nations with barbarous names (scarcely one of

which corresponds to any that was ever mentioned by any historian before or since), all of whom obeyed the mighty Hermanric. There is a sort of mythical character about all the information that we receive concerning this Ostrogothic conqueror; but as it is said, with some appearance of truthfulness, that he extended his dominions even to the Aestii, who dwelt upon the amber-producing shore of the Baltic, his kingdom, which evidently included many Slavonic<sup>1</sup> as well as Teutonic tribes, must have occupied the greater part of Southern Russia and Lithuania, and was probably much the largest dominion then governed by any single barbarian ruler.

Did the royal power of Hermanric include any overlordship over the Visigothic branch of the nation? It is difficult to answer this question decisively; but, upon the whole, notwithstanding many traces of independent action, it seems probable that the Visigoths were, however loosely, incorporated in the great confederacy of barbarian tribes whereof Hermanric was the head<sup>2</sup>. Their own immediate rulers bore some title of less commanding import than that of King, which has been

Had Hermanric the overlordship over the Visigoths?

<sup>1</sup> Jordanes describes the victorious wars of Hermanric first against the Heruli, whom he places in the swampy regions near the Sea of Azof, and then against the Veneti [Wends]. The latter, he says, were a vast nation, widely scattered over various regions, but chiefly conspicuous in three of their branches, the Veneti proper, the Sclaveni and the Antes. He seems to place the Sclaveni on the upper waters of the Dniester and the Vistula, that is in the neighbourhood of modern Galicia, and the Antes around the curve of the Euxine Sea from the Dniester to the Dnieper, that is in Kieff, Podolia, and Kherson. 'All these three tribes, though now [550] they are raging everywhere around us, then obeyed the orders of Hermanric.'

De Reb. Get. xxiii.  
De Reb. Get. v.

<sup>2</sup> This is Dahn's conclusion (*Könige der Germanen*, ii. 90), strong as he considers the 'centrifugal' tendency of the Visigothic clans to have been between Cniva and Hermanric.



BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

translated by the Roman historians into the vague word *Judex*<sup>1</sup> (Judge). The inferiority of the title, and the fact that it was apparently borne by several persons at a time, are clear indications that a disintegrating process was at work in the Visigothic nation, and that the unity which a monarchical constitution gives was beginning to disappear under the influence of peaceful contact with the higher civilisation of the Empire.

Teutonic  
kingship.

At a later period<sup>2</sup> the reader's attention will be called to some of the interesting but difficult questions connected with German kingship. Meanwhile it may be well that he should note for himself how far the authority of the king was limited by the necessity of obtaining for his decisions the approval of the armed nation, and what was the effect of warlike and of peaceful intercourse with Rome, either in consolidating or in loosening the regal power among the barbarians. These are really the two most important points in the constitutional history of the Germanic tribes; and while complete and well-rounded theories concerning them are much more easily formed than

<sup>1</sup> 'Athararicum eâ tempestate judicem potentissimum' (Ammianus, xxvii, 5, 6). 'Athararichus Thervingorum judex' (Ammianus, xxxi, 3, 4). Zosimus calls Athararic (as Dahn says with purposed ambiguity), τὸν ἔχοντα τὴν ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἰστρον Σκυθῶν ἐπικράτειαν (iv. 7), and ὁ τῶν Σκυθῶν ἡγούμενος (iv. 10). Themistius (Or. x.) mentions it as a sign of the intelligence of Athararic that βασιλέως ἐπωνυμίαν ἀπαξιοῖ, τὴν τοῦ δικαστοῦ δὲ ἀγαπᾷ. Notwithstanding the ingenious argument in Dahn's Bausteine, vi. 112, that *Judex* in Ammianus simply means general, I still think that his earlier view is the correct one, and that Judge (in Gothic probably *staua*) was the title specially used by Athararic and the other Visigothic chieftains. This is strongly confirmed by the use of the word *Judex* in the recently discovered Paris MS. on the life of Ulfilas. (See below.)

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iii. chap. 7.

solidly established, the careful observer of a multitude of little facts which meet us in the course of the narrative, will probably arrive at some general conclusion which will not be far from the truth.

BOOK I.  
CH. 1.

One thing may be at once stated, that the invariable tendency of war, especially of war in critical and dangerous times, was to exalt the kingly office. The same national necessities which led the United States of America to entrust almost despotic authority, under the name of 'the War-Power,' to President Lincoln during the late war of secession, led to the disappearance of many a Gothic and Frankish kinglet, and to the concentration of supreme power in the hands of an Alaric, a Theodoric, or a Clovis during the long struggle for victory with Rome.

Tendency  
of war to  
increase  
the royal  
power.

On the other hand, when 'Romania' and 'Barbaricum' were at peace one with another, the influence of the Empire on barbarian royalty was, as has been already said, disintegrating. The majesty of the Augustus at Rome or Constantinople overshadowed the rude and barbarous splendour of the Gothic *Thiudans*<sup>1</sup>. His pretensions to be descended from the gods were met with a quiet sneer by the Greek merchant who brought his wares to sell in the Teutonic homestead. Touching at so many points the great and civilised world-Empire, from which they were often separated only by a ford or a ferry, and touching it in friendly and profitable intercourse, the barbarians were ever in danger of losing that feeling of national unity which both lent strength to the institution of kingship, and received strength therefrom. The Governor of the province on the opposite side of the river became more

Peace with  
Rome  
lessened  
the royal  
authority.

<sup>1</sup> The Gothic word for King.

BOOK I. to the Teuton as his own distant and seldom-seen King  
 CH. 1. became less. The barbarian began to forget that he  
 was a Goth or a Vandal or an Alaman, and to think  
 of himself as a Moesian, a Pannonian, or a Gaulish  
 provincial. Thus did Rome during the long intervals  
 of peace win many a bloodless victory over her bar-  
 barian neighbours.

Introduc-  
 tion of  
 Christi-  
 anity and  
 of the art  
 of writing.

This process, which was probably going on during  
 all the first half of the fourth century, and which  
 seemed to foretell a very different result from that  
 which actually came to pass, was powerfully aided, as  
 far as the Visigoths were concerned, by two momentous  
 changes which were being introduced among them.  
 The worship of Wodan and Thunor was being displaced  
 by the religion of Christ, and the Gothic language was  
 giving birth to a literature. The chief agent in these  
 two events, full of importance even to the present day,  
 was a man who a hundred years ago would have been  
 spoken of as an obscure ecclesiastic, but for whom in  
 our own day the new science of the History of Speech  
 has asserted his rightful position, as certainly 'attaining  
 to the first three' in the century in which he lived. If  
 the greatest name of that century be admitted to be  
 Constantine, and if the second place be yielded to  
 Athanasius, at least the third may be claimed for the  
 missionary bishop of the Goths and the first translator  
 of the Bible into a barbarian tongue, the noble-hearted  
 Ulfilas.

Bishop  
 Ulfilas.  
 311-381.  
 Philostor-  
 gius, H. E.  
 ii. 5.  
 259.

Ulfilas, who was born probably in 311<sup>1</sup>, was not of  
 pure Teutonic extraction, but was descended from  
 Cappadocian ancestors who had been carried captive

<sup>1</sup> His birth-year used to be assigned to 318, but Bessell (*Ueber das  
 Leben des Ulfilas*, p. 53) has shown strong reasons in favour of 311.

by the Goths, probably during that raid into Asia Minor which ended at the baths of Anchialus<sup>1</sup>. He was however himself, in heart and by speech, a Goth, and in the course of his life he became master both of the Greek and Latin languages. In the capacity either of an ambassador or, more probably, a hostage<sup>2</sup>, he was sent while still a young man to Constantinople. During his stay there (which lasted apparently for about ten years), if not at an earlier period, he embraced the Christian religion; he was ordained *Lector* (Reader); and eventually, in the thirtieth year of his age, he was consecrated bishop by the great Arian ecclesiastic, Eusebius of Nicomedia<sup>3</sup>. From this time onwards for forty years he was engaged in frequent missionary journeys among his countrymen in Dacia, many of whom, having become converts to Christianity, were persuaded by him to cross the frontier, in order to escape the cruel persecutions of their heathen countrymen, and to settle within the limits of the Roman Empire. These Christianised Gothic settlers were called *Gothi Minores*, and their dwellings were situated upon the northern slopes of the Balkans. Our information as to these Lesser Goths is derived exclusively from the following passage in Jordanes (*De Rebus Geticis*, cap. 51):—

‘There were also certain other Goths, who are called *The Gothi Minores*, an immense people, with their bishop and primate Vulfila, who is said, moreover, to have taught them letters: and they are at this day dwelling in Moesia, in the district called Nicopolitana<sup>4</sup>, at the foot

<sup>1</sup> Philostorgius, *H. E.* ii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> After the war between Constantine and Ariaric.

<sup>3</sup> Probably at the Synod of Antioch, at which Eusebius presided.

<sup>4</sup> So Mommsen reads in his edition of Jordanes, instead of the old unintelligible ‘Encopolitana.’



BOOK I. of Mount Haemus, a numerous race, but poor and  
 CH. 1. unwarlike, abounding only in cattle of divers kinds,  
 and rich in pastures and forest timber, having little  
 wheat, though the earth is fertile in producing other  
 crops. They do not appear to have any vineyards:  
 those who want wine buy it of their neighbours; but  
 most of them drink only milk.'

The result then of this partial Christianisation of  
 the Visigoths by the labours of Ulfilas was, that by  
 the middle of the fourth century a peaceful invasion  
 of Moesia had been made, and a colony of simple-  
 hearted Gothic herdsmen was settled between the  
 Balkans and the Danube, near the modern city of  
 Tirnova.

Contempo-  
 rary infor-  
 mation as  
 to the life  
 of Ulfilas.

From a most interesting MS. recently discovered at  
 Paris, which contains a sketch of the life of Ulfilas by  
 a contemporary and devoted admirer, probably Auxen-  
 tius, bishop of Dorostorus (the modern Silistria), we  
 learn that it was the persecuting policy of a Visigothic  
*Judex* that drove Ulfilas and his emigrants across the  
 Danube. 'And when,' says Auxentius, 'through the  
 envy and mighty working of the enemy, there was  
 kindled a persecution of the Christians by an irreligious  
 and sacrilegious Judge of the Goths, who spread  
 tyrannous affright through the barbarian land<sup>1</sup>, it  
 came to pass that Satan, who desired to do evil,  
 unwillingly did good; that those whom he sought  
 to make deserters became confessors of the faith; that  
 the persecutor was conquered, and his victims wore  
 the wreath of victory. Then, after the glorious mar-  
 tyrdom of many servants and handmaids of Christ, as

<sup>1</sup> 'In Varbarico.' B and V are constantly interchanged in the  
 MSS. of this period.



the persecution still raged vehemently, after seven years of his episcopate were expired, the blessed Ulfilas being driven from "Varbaricum" with a great multitude of confessors, was honourably received on the soil of "Romania" by the Emperor Constantius of blessed memory. Thus as God by the hand of Moses delivered his people from the violence of Faraoh and the Egyptians, and made them pass through the Red Sea, and ordained that they should serve Him [on Mount Sinai], even so by means of Ulfilas did God deliver the confessors of His only-begotten Son from the "Varbarian" land, and cause them to cross over the Danube, and serve Him upon the mountains [of Haemus] like his saints of old.'

BOOK I.  
CH. I.  
348.

The comparison of Ulfilas to Moses appears to have been a favourite one with his contemporaries. We are told that the Emperor Constantius, who probably had met him face to face, and who approved of his settlement of the lesser Goths in Moesia, called him 'the Moses of our day<sup>1</sup>.' But if he was the Moses of the Gothic people he was also their Cadmus, the introducer of letters, the father and originator of all that Teutonic literature which now fills no inconsiderable space in the libraries of the world. Let us briefly summarise what he did for his people as author of their alphabet and translator of the Christian Scriptures into their dialect.

Ulfilas, the  
Moses of  
the Gothic  
people.

As has been before stated, the Goths and their

<sup>1</sup> 'Ἰδρύσατο δ' ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν αὐτόμολον τοῦτον λαὸν περὶ τὰ τῆς Μυσίας χωρία, ὡς ἐκάστῳ φίλον ἦν, καὶ τὸν Οὐρφίλαν διὰ πλείστης ἡγε τιμῆς, ὡς καὶ πολλάκις ὁ ἐφ' ἡμῶν Μωσῆς λέγειν περὶ αὐτοῦ. The Emperor here referred to must be Constantius, though Philostorgius does not mention his name.

Philostorgius, ii. 15.

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Before Ul-  
filas the  
Goths had  
only the  
Runic  
letters.

Ulfilas'  
alphabet  
was chiefly  
founded on  
the Greek.

kindred peoples already possessed an alphabet of a rude and primitive kind, the Runic *Futhorc*. But this was best adapted, and practically was only used, for short inscriptions on wood or stone, on metal or horn, such as 'Oltha owns this axe,' 'This shield belongs to Hagsi,' 'Echlew made this horn for the dread forest-king<sup>1</sup>;' or the already-mentioned Buzeu inscription, 'Holy to the temple of the Goths.' In fact, if any one looks at the shapes of the earlier Runic letters he will see that they are just those shapes which an unskilful workman naturally adopts, when carving even the letters of our own alphabet with a knife on the trunk of a tree. All is straight lines and angles, and the circle, or any kind of curve, is as much as possible avoided. It was not in this way or on this kind of materials that a national literature could come into being. Ulfilas therefore, who was of course possessed of all the graphic appliances of a Byzantine scribe of the fourth century, determined to free himself entirely, or almost entirely, from the primaeval Runes of his forefathers, and to fashion the new alphabet of his people mainly upon that which was most extensively used upon the shores of the Euxine and the Aegean and in the holy city of Constantinople<sup>2</sup>, the venerable alphabet of Hellas. While referring the reader who may be interested in this subject to a note in which it is more fully discussed, it will be sufficient to say here that, both in the order and the forms of the letters, the alphabet of Ulfilas is based upon the Greek, but that it contains three letters which are unmistakably Runic

<sup>1</sup> Stephens' Old Runic Monuments, i. 205, 287, 328.

<sup>2</sup> 'Constantinopolim immo vero Cristianopolim' (Auxentius apud Waitz, p. 21).

(those which represent J, U, and O), three in which a Runic influence is observable (B, R, and F), and three in which a similar influence seems to have been exerted by the Latin alphabet (Q, H, and S). BOOK I.  
CH. I.

The grammar of the Gothic tongue, as exhibited in the translation of Ulfilas, is, it need hardly be said, of priceless value in the history of Human Speech. We here see, not indeed the original of all the Teutonic languages, but a specimen of one of them, three centuries earlier than any other that has been preserved, with many inflections which have since been lost, with words which give us the clue to relationships otherwise untraceable, and with phrases which cast a strong light on the fresh and joyous youth of the Teutonic peoples. In short, it is not too much to say, that the same place which the study of Sanscrit holds in the history of the development of the great Indo-European family of nations is occupied by the Gothic of Ulfilas (Moeso-Gothic, as it is sometimes not very happily named) in reference to the unwritten history of the Germanic races. Philologi-  
cal value  
of Moeso-  
Gothic.

But let us not, as enthusiastic philologists, fancy that Ulfilas lived but to preserve for posterity certain fast-perishing Gothic roots, and to lay the foundation for 'Grimm's Law' of the transmutation of consonants. To Christianise and to civilise the Gothic people was the one, chief and successfully accomplished, aim of his life. It was for this that he undertook, amidst all the perils and hardships of his missionary life, the labour, great because so utterly unprecedented, of turning the Septuagint and the Greek New Testament into the language of a barbarous and unlettered race; by the mere conception of such a work showing a mind Transla-  
tion of the  
Bible.

BOOK I. CH. 1. centuries in advance of its contemporaries. Nor was it a portion only, the Gospels or the Psalms, as in the case of our own King Alfred 500 years later, which was thus rendered into a language 'understood of the people.' The whole of the New Testament and much the larger part of the Old were turned into Gothic by the good bishop, who, however, according to a well-known story<sup>1</sup>, refrained from translating 'the Books of Kings' (that is, of course, the two Books of Samuel and the two of Kings), 'which contain the history of wars: because his nation was already very fond of war, and needed the bit rather than the spur, so far as fighting was concerned.' One can understand the wise 'economy' of truth, which withheld, from these fierce Dacian warriors, Sagas so exciting as the battle of Mount Gilboa, the slaughter of Baal's priests at the foot of Carmel, and the extermination of the House of Ahab by Jehu son of Nimshi.

From what sources did Ulfilas make his translation?

Ulfilas, who was of course well acquainted with the Greek language, no doubt translated the Old Testament from the Septuagint version and the New from the original Greek. His translation has been appealed to for the last two centuries as a valuable witness to the condition of the Greek text in the fourth century. It contains however some singular traces of the influence of the old Latin text where that differs from the Greek. This is generally explained as the result of corrections in his version, made by some later hand during the residence of the Ostrogoths in Italy. But considering the close connexion which existed between the Churches of Illyricum and those of Italy<sup>2</sup>, it seems at least as

<sup>1</sup> Told by Philostorgius, ii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> As illustrated at the Councils of Sardica and Aquileia, and during the controversy on the Three Chapters.



probable that Ulfilas himself worked with the old Latin version (the *Itala*) before him, and in these passages gave it the preference over his Greek codices. This view of the matter is confirmed by the express statement of Auxentius that he was conversant with three languages, Greek, Latin, and Gothic<sup>1</sup>.

Of the great work thus accomplished by the Moesian bishop, fragments only, but precious fragments, are left to us. Of the Old Testament we have two or three chapters of Ezra and Nehemiah, and nothing else save scattered quotations; but of the New Testament we have the greater part of the Epistles of St. Paul in palimpsest; and above all, we have more than half of the Gospels preserved in the splendid Codex Argenteus at Upsala; a MS. probably of the fifth century, which is inscribed in silver and gold characters upon a parchment of rich purple colour, and which, both by the beauty of its execution, by the importance of its text, and of the perished language in which it is written, and by its own almost romantic history is certainly one of the greatest palaeographical treasures in the world.

If it is often hard in our own day to say whether a great man more moulds his age or is moulded by it, we need not to be surprised that we find it difficult to decide with certainty how far Ulfilas originated, and how far he merely represented, the conversion of the Teutonic races to Christianity. Something had probably been already done by the Greek dwellers in the cities on the Euxine to convert the Ostrogoths of the Crimea to the orthodox faith; and hence it is that we

<sup>1</sup> 'Apostolicâ gratiâ Grecam et Latinam et Gothicam linguam sine intermissione in unâ et solâ ecclesiâ Christi predicavit' (Auxentius apud Waitz, p. 19).

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

Existing  
remains of  
Ulfilas'  
translation  
of the  
Bible.

Import-  
ance of the  
work per-  
formed by  
Ulfilas.



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find a certain bishop Theophilus, who is called Bosporitanus (doubtless from the Cimmerian Bosphorus) appearing from among the Goths ('de Gothis') at the Council of Nicaea, and subscribing its decrees. But this seems to have been a feeble and exotic growth. The apostolate of Ulfilas among the Visigoths was, as far as we can see, the efficient cause of the conversion, not of that nation only, but of all the Teutonic tribes by whom they were surrounded. His was evidently a most potent personality, and his book, carried by traders and warriors from village to village, and from camp to camp of the barbarians, may have been even more powerful than his living voice. Let the operating cause have been what it may, nearly all the Teutonic nations of Eastern Europe who came in contact with the Empire during the period upon which we are about to enter, became Christian in the course of the fourth century and chiefly during the lifetime of Ulfilas.

His  
Arianism.

But the form of Christianity taught by Ulfilas, and earnestly accepted by the Goth, the Vandal, the Burgundian, and the Sueve, was one of the various forms which passed under the common denomination of Arianism. Many have been the stories, dishonouring to Ulfilas and the Goths, and quite inadequate to the result that they profess to explain, which, probably without any untruthful intent, the ecclesiastical historians have put into circulation in order to explain this unacceptable triumph of heterodoxy. It has often been asserted that the Goths were seduced into heresy by the Arian Emperor Valens, that their profession of the form of Christianity which he professed was the price paid by them for that settlement within the confines of the Empire which will shortly have to be

described, and that the broker in this unholy compact was their revered bishop Ulfilas. A careful study of the whole subject<sup>1</sup> proves the extreme improbability, we may almost say, the absolute falsity of this account of the matter. Some influence must probably be attributed to the previous religious training of the Goths and the nations akin to them, when we seek to account for the rapid diffusion of Arian Christianity among them. Accustomed as they were to think of the All-father and his godlike sons, it was easy to accept the teaching of the priests who told them of a second God, strong as Thunor, but also gentle and beloved as Balder, who sat as it were on the steps of the throne of the Most High, a God in his relation to the human family, but yet not equal in power and majesty to the eternal Father. And it was the same kind of thought, struggling with the philosophic conception of the unity of the Supreme Being, which strove to find an utterance in the multitudinous creeds, Arian and Semi-Arian, to which the Councils of the fourth century gave birth.

But after all, though such considerations as these may account for the special fascination which Arianism had for the Teutonic neighbours of the Empire, and for the special dangers that attended a form of faith in which their old polytheism perhaps still lingered, they are not necessary to explain the Arianism of their greatest teacher and apostle. His religious career almost precisely corresponds with those fifty years of reaction from Nicene orthodoxy which present so difficult a problem in the history of the Eastern Church<sup>2</sup>.

Ulfilas was an Arian because his teachers in the Eastern Church were Arians.

<sup>1</sup> As made especially by Bessell (*Ueber das Leben des Ulfilas und die Bekehrung der Gothen*, pp. 53-73).

<sup>2</sup> The story of this Anti-Nicene reaction, which should hardly be

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The truth is therefore that Ulfilas was an Arian because every considerable ecclesiastic with whom he came in contact at Constantinople was an Arian; because that was the form of faith (or so it seemed to him) which he had been first taught; because he was consecrated bishop by the great Arian controversialist Eusebius of Nicomedia, and received the kiss of peace from the prelates to whose ranks he had just been admitted, at the great Arian synod of Antioch (341); because, in short, during the whole time that his theological mind was being moulded, Arianism, of one kind or another, was orthodoxy at Constantinople, and Athanasius was denounced as a dangerous heretic. He himself, when lying at the point of death, prefaced his Arian confession of faith with these emphatic words: 'I, Ulfilas, bishop and confessor, *have ever thus believed*' (*semper sic credidi*): and there is no reason to doubt that, as far as any man can speak accurately of his own spiritual history, these words were true.

His Arianism was of the kind called Homoean.

The form of Arianism (for that battle-cry was uttered by many armies) which Ulfilas professed was that generally known as the *Homoion*, and agreed well with his lifelong devotion to the work of translating and disseminating the Scriptures. While Athanasius was fighting, sometimes against the world, for the mystic word *Homo-ousion*<sup>1</sup>; while the Semi-Arian bishops were labouring to re-unite all parties and keep their own sees by means of the cunningly devised word called Arian, since some of the leaders in it did not agree with Arius, but rather wished to get back to the state of belief before Arius denied, or Athanasius affirmed, certain propositions concerning the nature of Christ, is admirably told in Mr. H. M. Gwatkin's *Studies of Arianism* (Cambridge, 1882).

<sup>1</sup> '(The Son is) of one substance with the Father.'

*Homoi-ousion*<sup>1</sup>; while the controversy was passing on to niceties of speculation concerning 'being' and 'substance'<sup>2</sup> which only the Greek language could express, and which probably not a single, even Greek intellect really understood; the advocates of the Homoion tried to recall the combatants to a more simple and more scriptural standing-ground, and said: 'Neither Homo-ousios nor Homoi-ousios is to be found in the archives of our faith. Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is *like* (*Homoios*) to the Father who begat him according to the Scriptures.' This was the language of the creed adopted at the Arian Synod of Constantinople, a creed which, as we are expressly told, received the signature of Bishop Ulfilas. The confession of faith already alluded to, which he composed when lying on his death-bed, contains these words: 'I, Ulfilas, bishop and confessor, have ever thus believed, and in this, the alone true faith, do I make my testament to my Lord. I believe that there is one God the Father, alone unbegotten and invisible: and in his only-begotten Son our Lord and our God, artificer and maker of every creature, having none like unto himself . . . ; and in one Holy Spirit, an illuminating and sanctifying power, neither God nor Lord, but the minister of Christ, subject and obedient in all things to the Son, as the Son is subject and obedient in all things to the Father.' In the account of the teaching of Ulfilas given by his admirer Auxentius, it is said: 'By his sermons and his tracts he showed that there is a difference between the divinity of the Father and the Son, of the God un-

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360.

Socrates,  
ii. 41.

<sup>1</sup> 'Of like substance with the Father.'

<sup>2</sup> οὐσία and ὑπόστασις.



BOOK I. begotten and of the God only-begotten: and that  
 CH. I. the Father is the Creator of the Creator, but the  
 Son the Creator of the whole creation; the Father,  
 God of our Lord, but the Son the God of every  
 creature.'

Unlike the  
 modern  
 form of  
 hetero-  
 doxy.

This, it will at once be seen, is not Trinitarian orthodoxy, but neither is it anything like the views concerning the nature of Jesus Christ which are held in our own time by the vast majority of those who would disdain for themselves the title of Orthodox Christians. In order to understand the theological conditions of the period before us, it is necessary that we should let the disputants speak their own language, and should not attribute to those who are now classed as heretics, either more or less deviation from the standard of faith which has now been established in the Christian Church for fifteen centuries, than is disclosed to us by their own creeds and anathemas, of which they have left us so copious a provision.

Historical  
 consequen-  
 ces of the  
 Arianism  
 of the  
 Teutonic  
 races.

But if the theological chasm between the barbarian converts of Ulfilas and the party which ultimately triumphed in the Church was somewhat less than our modern prepossessions would have led us to suppose, from a political and historical point of view the disastrous effect of the conversion of the Goths and their kindred to the Arian form of Christianity can hardly be stated too strongly. That conversion made the barbarians parties to the long law-suit between Arians and Trinitarians, which had dragged on its weary length through the greater part of the fourth century, and in which, up to the time that we are now speaking of, the persecuting spirit, the bitterness, the abuse of court favour, had been mainly on the side of



the Arians. The tide was now soon to turn, and the disciples of Athanasius were to be the dominant party, the favourites of court and people. Into such a world, into the midst of a clergy and a laity passionately attached to the Homo-ousian formula, the Arian Teutons were about to be poured, not only to subdue and overturn, but if possible to renew and to rebuild. In this work of reconstruction the difference of creeds proved to be a great and often a fatal difficulty. The Barbarian might be tolerated by the Roman; by the Catholic the Arian could not but be loathed. Of even the Heathen there was hope, for he might one day renounce his dumb idols and might seek admission, as did the Frank and the Saxon, into the bosom of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church. But the Schismatic would probably grow hardened in his sin, he would plant his false bishops and his rival priests side by side with the officers of the true Church in every diocese and every parish. There could be no amalgamation for the faithful with the Arians. The only course was to groan under them, to conspire against them, and as soon as possible to expel them.

Here then for the present, having reached the seventh decade of the third century, we leave that great confederacy of Teutonic peoples which went by the collective name of Goths. They have wandered from the Baltic to the Euxine; they have engaged in one terrible conflict with Rome, the result of which was all but fatal to the Empire. They have since then been for the greater part of a century at peace with their mighty neighbour; they have received her subsidies; they have served under her eagles; they are rapidly embracing her newly adopted faith. It may be that

BOOK I.  
CH. I.

The situation as  
viewed by  
Julian.  
(circa 362.)

BOOK I. they will be altogether moulded according to her im-  
CH. I.

press, and that Gothia will gradually become Romania. Not so however thinks the keen analytic intellect of the philosopher on the throne. From under his unkempt hair the piercing eye of Julian discerns the coming danger. 'When his war against the Persians was coming to a head, either by some divine warning or by the exercise of his reason, he perceived from afar the coming troubles among the Goths like the ground-swell of a storm. For he said in one of his letters, "The Goths are now at rest, but perhaps they will not always so continue."'

Eunapius,  
Excerpt 15.

NOTE A. ON SOME OMITTED CHAPTERS OF THE DE REBUS GETICIS,  
AND ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE GOTHs AND GETAE.

In common with almost all recent enquirers into Gothic history I reject, as not properly belonging thereto, certain chapters in the treatise of Jordanes. Still, in order to avoid the charge of garbling historical evidence, it is right to give the reader a hint of the contents of these rejected chapters. NOTE A.

The first part of the foregoing sketch, which contains the essence of what seem to be the traditions of the Goths themselves as to their early wanderings, is taken from the first four chapters of Jordanes' *De Rebus Geticis*. I omit all notice of the following nine chapters, and join the course of his narrative again in the fourteenth chapter, where he describes the differentiation into Ostrogoths and Visigoths. The fifteenth contains the perfectly historical account of the Emperor Maximin, who probably was of Gothic origin; the sixteenth opens with the reign of Philip the Arabian, and from this point onwards the narrative runs side by side with the authentic history of the Roman Empire. 235-238.  
244-249.

What, then, is the subject-matter of the nine chapters which have been passed over in silence?

Chapter V is chiefly occupied with a description of Scythia, in which the Goths were now settled, and incidentally with some account of *Zamolxis* their great philosopher. Now *Zamolxis* is mentioned by Herodotus as the teacher who communicated to the Getae the doctrine of immortality, which, according to some, he had himself learned from Pythagoras. If he was a historical personage at all he lived probably about 500 B. C.

Chapter VI records the expedition of *Taunasis*, king of the Goths, into Egypt, which he subdues and hands over to the king of the Medes. Deserters from his army form the nation of the Parthians.

Chapter VII gives a long and tedious account of the wars of

NOTE A. the Amazons (the Gothic women who were left behind when their husbands undertook the aforesaid expedition into Egypt), relates their conquests in Asia, and contains a wildly incorrect sketch of the geographical position of Mount Caucasus.

Chapter VIII continues the history of the Amazons, and connects it with the classical stories of Theseus, Hippolyte, and Penthesilea (say 1200 B. C.).

Chapter IX, returning to the male Getae, asserts, on the authority of the 'Getica' of Dio (the Roman historian of the third century), that Telephus, son of Hercules and nephew of Priam, was their king (about 1160 B. C.).

525 B. C. Chapter X contains the old classical stories about Cyrus's war  
516 B. C. with Queen Tomyris, the invasions of Scythia by Darius and  
429 B. C. Xerxes, and the wars of Sitalces, king of Thrace, with Perdiccas, king of Macedon, successor (it should be ancestor) of Alexander the Great.

Chapter XI describes the arrival of a certain Diceneus among the Goths and the science of theology which he taught them. His arrival is in the reign of *Boroista*. There was a king of Dacia named *Boerebistas*, a contemporary of Augustus, who is possibly intended here. The description of the priests, who were called 'the Hatted Men' (*Pileati*), because when they sacrificed they were covered with a kind of mitre, while the rest of the people were called *Capillati*, on account of the long hair in which they gloried, has more of the ring of truth about it than the pseudo-classical legends of the chapters immediately preceding.

In Chapter XII King *Corillus* leads the Goths into Dacia, the geographical situation of which is described.

85-90 A.D. In Chapter XIII the wars of the *Getae* against Rome during the reign of Domitian (entirely historical) are described, and the credit of them claimed for the Goths.

With Chapter XIV, as before stated, we rejoin the stream of genuine Gothic history.

It is evident that our historian here professes to cover a vast period of time. From the indications furnished by the text, and from a computation at the end of the Gothic history<sup>1</sup>, Mommsen

Cap. lx. <sup>1</sup> Jordanes, speaking of the surrender of Ravenna to Belisarius (A.D. 540), says, 'Sic famosum regnum, fortissimamque gentem diu regnantem tandem pene duo millensimo et tricensimo anno . . . Justinianus . . . vicit' (2030-540 = 1490).

(following the calculation of another German scholar, Gutschmid) NOTE A.  
estimates that Jordanes himself placed the first migration, from  
Sweden, 1490 B.C., and the second, to the Euxine, 1324 B.C.<sup>1</sup>

Now if we were bound to accept or reject in their entirety these first thirteen chapters of the history of Jordanes, there would be little doubt that we must vote for their rejection. Any tradition as to the migrations of the Gothic people, fourteen or fifteen centuries before the Christian Era, is so remote as to be almost valueless; and the allusions to classical history are all of a kind which show us that we are dealing not with true Teutonic *saga*, but with the reconstructive work of a Greek or Roman scholar in his library. They are not genuine coins, however worn, but sharp and modern imitations that we have here before us.

Moreover, if the Gothic nation had migrated from the Baltic to the Euxine thirteen centuries before Christ, Tacitus and Pliny would not have written about them as still dwelling by the Baltic shore in the first century after Christ.

Happily we are not reduced to the necessity of accepting or rejecting the first thirteen chapters as a whole. We know that Jordanes copied from Cassiodorus, and we know that the one object of Cassiodorus was to convince his countrymen that the Goths were a respectable and long-descended nation, having their roots deep in classical antiquity. In carrying their ancestors back to the Trojan war, he is rendering them exactly the same service which the professional genealogist renders to the successful tradesman in discovering for him an ancestor who came over with William the Conqueror.

This process of 'making the origin of the Goths a part of Roman history'<sup>2</sup> was assisted and almost invited by two mistaken identifications, for neither of which was Cassiodorus or his copyist Jordanes responsible. (1) The identification of the Goths with the Scythians, and (2) the identification of the Goths with the Getae.

(1) We have seen that Zosimus and Dexippus, writing concerning the great invasions of the third century made by the Goths and their kindred tribes, call the actors in them Scythians.

<sup>1</sup> Prooemium, p. xxi.

<sup>2</sup> See Cassiodori Variarum, ix. 25. I may refer to the Introduction to my Letters of Cassiodorus, p. 29, for a somewhat fuller statement of the above argument.



NOTE A. It appears however to be the opinion of the majority of ethnologists that the Scythians mentioned by Herodotus were a Mongolian people. Some think them to have been Slavonic; and of the few who hold them to have been Teutonic none identify them with the Goths of the fourth century, the old etymology  $\Sigma\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\theta\alpha\iota$  = Gothi being apparently quite abandoned.

It is admitted too that most of the post-Herodotean writers used the word 'Scythians' in such a very vague sense, for the inhabitants of all the countries north of the Euxine, the Caucasus, and the Persian Empire, that the term is of little value in ethnological investigations. Like our own word 'Indians,' it proves nothing as to the origin of most of the races to which it has been applied. There cannot be a more striking proof that 'Scythian' is merely a geographical and not an ethnological term, than the fact that Priscus, a contemporary probably of Zosimus, uses it regularly to describe the Huns, the successors of the Goths in the region north of the Danube, but members of an utterly different nationality from theirs, as every Roman historian of the period knew.

2. As for the *Getae*, we can speak more positively. It is next to an historical impossibility that they and the Goths can have been the same people. The *Getae*, having lived for many centuries close to the frontiers of Greek and Roman civilisation, have a well-marked and ascertained place in history. They were a Thracian people. They fought against Perdiccas, king of Macedonia, at the time of the Peloponnesian war. They frequently sold their children as slaves to the Greeks, so that *Geta* is one of the commonest names for a slave in classical comedies. They occupied Dacia, and under the name of *Dacians* successfully resisted for some generations the power of Rome. Their hero-chief Decebalus was at length defeated by the Emperor Trajan, a defeat celebrated by the Column of that Emperor at Rome. Their country was turned into a Roman province, and notwithstanding its proposed abandonment by Hadrian, it remained for 150 years under Roman influence, and for the greater part of that time under Roman government. Can any one who knows the pulverising, assimilating character of the Roman dominion believe that these *Getae*, so long subject to the rule of the *legatus* and the centurion, were the same people as the nomad Goths following the guidance of their own long-haired Amal chiefs, who

with such fresh vigour, and apparently as a hitherto unknown foe, precipitated themselves on the eastern provinces of the Empire in the reign of Caracalla? The testimony of language is still clearer. If the Goths were Getae, how could they have spoken the pure and primitive Low-German tongue which is enshrined in the Moeso-Gothic Bible of Ulfilas? NOTE A.

It seems therefore to be now generally admitted that the coincidence between the names Gothi and Getae is accidental; that the Romans themselves first called their new invaders by the former name (witness the title of the Emperor Claudius II, *Gothicus*, which is alone almost decisive of the controversy); that afterwards when they had abandoned Dacia to the Goths they called them by the name of the former inhabitants, just as we, though sprung chiefly from Angles, Saxons, and Danes, constantly call ourselves *Britons*; and that the obvious similarity between the two names Gothus and Geta aided this confusion, till at length Claudian wrote his poem *De Bello Getico* and Jordanes his treatise *De Rebus Geticis* without a suspicion, apparently, that Getic and Gethic had not been synonymous terms from the beginning of the world.

To sum up the whole matter. Winnowing away everything in Jordanes' history which relates to the Scythians and the Dacians, I believe that we have a fairly trustworthy and valuable deposit of true Gothic tradition left. It is probable *à priori* that this should be the case. Jordanes himself wrote, let us say, in 550; Cassiodorus, (on whose work he founded himself, and who was in continual communication with the king and chiefs of the Ostrogoths,) about the year 520. Gothic had then been a written language since the time of Ulfilas, that is from about 350, to say nothing of the possibility of a few barbarous records having been preserved before that time in Runic characters. Tacitus had marked the existence of the *Gothones* at the south-east corner of the Baltic about A.D. 100, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that some remembrance of the achievements and migrations of the nation during the intervening 250 years would be preserved 'in the old songs, which being recited in public, almost served the purpose of a history' (Jordanes, cap. iv).

It should be stated, that comparative philology does not oppose, but rather supports the belief in a migration of the

NOTE A. Goths from the Baltic to the Euxine, for Gothic occupies (e. g. in that set of phenomena which together constitute 'Grimm's Law') a place much nearer to Low German and Scandinavian, the dialects spoken on the Baltic coasts, than to High German, the language of South Germany.

NOTE B. ON THE NAMES OSTROGOTHS AND VISIGOTHS.

It will be seen from the text that we have no definite information as to the time when the Gothic nation was parted into two heads. Jordanes' statement that the division existed before they left their Scandinavian home, is interesting as a national *saga*, but quite destitute of historical probability.

Equally hard or harder is it to say when the names Ostrogoth and Visigoth (or, as many scholars prefer to write them, East Goth and West Goth) were first affixed to these two divisions. We might have expected, as one name seems to be correlated to the other, that both would appear in history simultaneously, but in fact 'Ostrogoth' occurs in historical literature nearly 200 years before we have any clear and undoubted use of 'Visigoth.'

(1) If Jordanes, transcribing Cassiodorus, speaks correctly, there was a Gothic king Ostrogotha contemporary with the Emperor Philip (244-249). In the *Historia Augusta* (*Vita Claudii*, vi) we have mention made of 'Austrogothi' among the nations invading the Empire during the reign of Claudius (268-270). The genuineness of the insertion of this name in the text has been doubted by some, perhaps on insufficient grounds. And as Trebellius Pollio, the author of this part of the *Historia Augusta*, did not write till about 300, he cannot be regarded as strictly contemporary. Claudian (399), in his poem against Eutropius (ii. 153), mentions the name

'Ostrogothis colitur, mistisque Gruthungis  
Phryx ager.'

These are the chief, if not the only appearances of the name

until the time of Cassiodorus, who no doubt in his Gothic History (written about 520) used it freely, though I cannot discover any trace of its use among the state-papers of Theodoric (the *Variae* of Cassiodorus). NOTE B.

(2) The earliest occurrence of Visigoth, and that in a defective form, is in the poems of Apollinaris Sidonius. In his Panegyric on Avitus (456) we have 'Vesorum procures' for the chiefs of the Visigoths, and 'Vesus' for the Visigothic king, Theodoric II: and in the Panegyric on Majorian (458) 'Vesus' as well as 'Ostrogothus' are mentioned among the barbarians who flocked to the standards of the Emperor. After this the name becomes common enough. It occurs in the *Variae* (iii. 1), and frequently (under the form *Ὀστρογότθοι*) in Procopius, who appears always to designate the Ostrogothic nation by the simple word *Γότθοι*.

But under what names then were the two sections of the Gothic nation spoken of during these two centuries, when 'Ostrogoth' and 'Visigoth' were so little, if at all, used by the Roman historians? The usual answer is that the names Greuthungi and Thervingi, which we meet with in Ammianus Marcellinus and other writers, correspond respectively to the Ostrogoths and Visigoths<sup>1</sup>. This theory, which was hinted at by Mascou<sup>2</sup> and more fully developed by Zeuss<sup>3</sup>, seems upon the whole best to correspond with the facts, though it is not without some difficulties of its own<sup>4</sup>.

But inasmuch as the two great nations which emerged, the one under Alaric and the other under Theodoric, into the full daylight of history and played their great part on the stage

<sup>1</sup> Greuthungi is used four times and Thervingi three times by Ammianus: Trutungi (= Greuthungi?) once in the *Historia Augusta*: Thervingi ('pars alia Gothorum') once by Mamertinus in his Panegyric on Maximian: Greuthungi six times by Claudian: Thervingi once by Eutropius.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Ancient Germans, vii. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 406-413.

<sup>4</sup> One difficulty is that in the passage of the *Historia Augusta*, already quoted (if genuine), Trutungi (= Greuthungi) and Austrogothi are spoken of as two separate peoples: 'Denique Scytharum diversi populi, Peucini, Trutungi, Austrogothi &c. praedae cupiditate in Romanum solum et Rempublicam venerunt' (Trebellius Pollio in *Vita Claudii*, vi). Another is that Claudian, as we have seen, speaks of 'Ostrogoths mixed with Gruthungi.' Another, that Ammianus (xxvii. 5-6) seems to speak of Athanaric, who was certainly a Visigoth, as *judex* of the Greuthungi. But the passage is susceptible of another interpretation; and as Ammianus in other places speaks of Athanaric as '*judex Thervingorum*,' we must suppose that if he here calls him otherwise it is owing to a slip of the pen.



**NOTE B.** of the world, setting up kingdoms and helping to throw down an Empire, were undoubtedly called Visigoths and Ostrogoths, it seems best to carry back these names into the darkness of their earlier annals, and by whatever name they may have called themselves in the third and fourth centuries (a point which it is probably hopeless now to determine) to speak of them from the first dawn of their separate existence under those two well-understood historic appellations.

**NOTE C. ON THE RUNIC ALPHABET OF THE GOTHs, THE ALPHABET OF ULFILAS, AND GOTHIC GRAMMAR.**

I propose briefly to indicate the relation of the alphabet of Ulfilas both to the Runic Futhorc of his forefathers and to the Greek and Latin alphabets of his teachers.

As is well known, the Runic alphabets varied considerably both in the number and shapes of their letters; but we shall probably not be far wrong in supposing that the 'Futhorc' in use among the Goths, when Ulfilas was a child, was something like this:—

ƿ	F	↯	Eo
ᚋ	U	ᚱ	P
ᚋ	Th	ʝ	A
ᚋ	O or Ae	ᚋ	S
ᚋ	R	↑	T
<	C	ᚱ	B
x	G	ᚋ	E
ᚋ	W	ᚋ	M
ᚋ	H	ᚋ	L
ᚋ	N	◇	NG
ᚋ	I	ᚋ	D
ᚋ	Y	ᚋ	O

Twenty-four letters in all.

The alphabet of Ulfilas is as follows. There are some slight variations in the forms of the letters, but we will take those



used in the early and beautifully executed Codex Argenteus. NOTE C. For purposes of comparison the Greek alphabet used in the Codex Sinaiticus (which was probably contemporary with Ulphilas) is placed side by side. It must be observed that the Gothic alphabet, like the Greek, is a numeration-table as well as an alphabet, and we thus know absolutely the order of the letters contained in it. The Greek has three signs and the Gothic two, introduced merely for purposes of numeration and not used as letters.

Numerical value.	Gothic letter.	English equivalent.	English equivalent.	Greek letter.
1	ⱦ	A	A	Α
2	ⱦ	B	B	Β
3	ⱦ	G	G	Γ
4	ⱦ	D	D	Δ
5	ⱦ	E	E	Ε
6	ⱦ	Q	Numeral	Ϛ (stigma)
7	ⱦ	Z	Z	Ζ
8	ⱦ	H	Ē	Η (or h)
9	ⱦ	Th	Th	Θ
10	ⱦ	I	I	Ι (or ĩ)
20	ⱦ	K	K	Κ
30	ⱦ	L	L	Λ
40	ⱦ	M	M	Μ
50	ⱦ	N	N	Ν
60	ⱦ	J	X	Ξ
70	ⱦ	U	O	Ο
80	ⱦ	P	P	Π
90	ⱦ	Numeral	Numeral	Ϙ
100	ⱦ	R	R	Ρ
200	ⱦ	S	S	Σ
300	ⱦ	T	T	Τ
400	ⱦ	V	U	Υ
500	ⱦ	F	Ph	Φ
600	ⱦ	Ch	Ch	Χ
700	ⱦ	W	Ps	Ψ
800	ⱦ	O	O	Ω
900	ⱦ	Numeral	Numeral	Ϟ (or in later Codices Ϛ, sampi)

NOTE C. It is at once evident that Ulfilas has founded his new alphabet mainly upon the Greek. Entirely departing from that order of letters which prevailed in the Runic 'Futhorc,' he has adopted, with very few exceptions, the order which prevails in the Greek alphabet. The very exceptions illustrate the general rule, and show the ingenuity of the Gothic apostle in making the redundancies and deficiencies of each alphabet balance one another.

1. The Greek alphabet possesses two sets of letters for the long and short forms of E and O. As Ulfilas did not require these, he has put his E and O opposite the short form of the one and the long form of the other, and then has used the place left vacant by Eta for the similar *looking* letter H, and the place of Omicron for his vowel U. There was something evidently peculiar both to Latin and Teutonic ears in the sound of the Greek U, and therefore Ulfilas sets opposite to it not his U but the kindred letter V.

2. The place occupied by the first merely numerical symbol (stigma) he appropriates for Q. Thus his alphabet has one letter more than the Greek: twenty-five instead of twenty-four.

3. The place of the Greek X, a sound not found in the Gothic language, is supplied by J.

4. He does not require the Greek Chi for native Gothic words, but he takes it over in order to enable him to reproduce Greek proper names which contain it, especially the name of Christ.

5. For the unneeded Psi he substitutes the essentially Teutonic W.

So much as to the *order* of the letters. Now as to their *shape*, upon which also the strong but not exclusive influence of the Greek alphabet will be at once apparent.

The following six letters, **Γ Δ Λ Π Υ Χ** (representing G D L P V Ch), are taken from the Greek alphabet, with no more modification than we can easily imagine to have existed between one codex and another in the fourth century.

These letters, nine in number, **Α Ε Ζ Η Ι Κ Μ Ν Τ** (representing A E Z H I K M N T), are also no doubt taken from the Greek, but are common to it and the Latin alphabet.

Perhaps **h** points to a Latin influence, as it is not often if ever found in Greek MSS. of so late a period, but is common in the Latin of the fourth century. NOTE C.

One letter, the peculiar **B** (**B**), with the upper circle left open, may be either Greek or Runic.

Three are clearly Runic:—

<b>G</b> ( <b>J</b> )	derived from the Rune	<b>ᚷ</b> .
<b>n</b> ( <b>U</b> )	do.	<b>ᚢ</b> .
<b>ʒ</b> ( <b>O</b> )	do.	<b>ᚦ</b> .

One letter only, **S**, seems to be unmistakably Latin; but **Q**, which Ulfilas uses for **Q**, appears to point to a Latin origin; though why he should have chosen a letter with so utterly different a power when the Latin **Q** was available for his purpose is a mystery of which, as it seems to me, we need further explanation.

These two letters **R** and **F** (**R** and **F**), may be either Runic or Latin, but are most probably Runic.

We have thus accounted for twenty-three out of the twenty-five letters of the Gothic alphabet. There remain two which at present we can only account for by a whim on the part of the Gothic letter-maker. These two are

$$\begin{aligned}\Psi &= \text{Th,} \\ \text{and } \odot &= \text{W.}\end{aligned}$$

The first, it will be at once observed, is almost identical with the Greek Psi, the second only slightly altered from the Greek Theta, a dot in the middle of the circle being substituted for a line across it. As they occur in the corresponding places to Theta and Psi, but in inverse order, it looks at first sight as if Ulfilas had transposed the two symbols out of pure caprice. On further consideration we shall probably arrive at some such conclusion as the following. The Gothic bishop, having arranged all the other letters of his alphabet, had still two sounds unrepresented, *th* and *hw*. For neither was there an exactly corresponding letter in the Greek alphabet, for we must suppose that the *th* differed from the *theta* of the Greeks in having either a thicker or a thinner pronunciation. To avoid all possibility of

NOTE C. mistake, therefore, he took the Greek Psi (the sound of which he did not need to represent), and with some slight modifications made it stand for his Gothic *th*; and similarly he made the transformed Theta do duty for his *hw*. This, or something like this, must surely be the explanation of the matter. To us, lovers of the old Runic lore of the Teutons, it certainly seems a matter of regret that Ulfilas did not here use at least one of the two Runic symbols ready to his hand—

Þ = *th*,  
 ƿ = *w*;

though to have used both would certainly have perpetuated a defect in the Runic Futhorc, namely, the employment of two letters so like one another and so easily confused.

From a survey of the whole question we certainly rise with a higher appreciation of the ingenuity and the philological acquirements of the Moeso-Gothic bishop. His alphabet alone would suffice to convince us of the truth of the assertion of Auxentius as to his familiarity with the three great languages of the Lower Danube: '*Apostolicâ gratiâ Grecam et Latinam et Gothicam linguam sine intermissione in unâ et solâ ecclesiâ Christi predicavit.*'

An interesting evidence of the fact that Ulfilas did not wish altogether to part company from the old Runic literature, in introducing his new and more flexible alphabet, is furnished by the discovery that his letters appear to have been known by the same, or nearly the same, names as those borne by their Runic equivalents. In a MS. of the ninth or tenth century preserved at Vienna<sup>1</sup> there are, attached to a treatise of Alcuin's *de Orthographiâ*, two alphabets, one, the Runic 'Futhorc' in use among the Anglo-Saxons, the other, the Gothic alphabet of Ulfilas, with the *names* of the letters annexed. These names have apparently been written by some High-German scribe unacquainted with Gothic, and thus have sustained considerable corruption, but the patient labours of four German scholars<sup>2</sup> have at length restored them in all probability nearly to their original form. This being done, we find that we have a Gothic alphabet constructed like the Anglo-Saxon one, on the principle

<sup>1</sup> Known as *Codex Salisburgiensis*, n. 140 (formerly 1xxi).

<sup>2</sup> Munch, Kirchhoff, Müllenhoff, and Zacher (*Das Gothische Alphabet Vulfilas und das Runenalphabet*). I quote chiefly from the last.

of children's picture alphabets ('A was an Archer, B was a Bull,' and so on), and choosing in almost all cases the same word as representative of the letter, which we know to have represented it in the old Runic 'Futhorcs.' NOTE C.

In the following table the order observed by the Vienna Codex (which is nearly but not quite that of the Latin alphabet) is maintained. The names are given both in their original and corrected forms, and the names of the corresponding Runes as given in an Anglo-Saxon poem (quoted by Kemble, *Archæologia*, 339-345) are also appended.

Gothic letter.	English equivalent.	Name according to Vienna MS.	Corrected Name.	Corresponding Rune.	Name in Anglo-Saxon Rune-song.
ⱁ	A	Aza	Asks(ash-tree) or Ans (a god)	ⱂ	Os (mouth)
ⱃ	B	Bercna	Bairika (birch)	ⱄ	Beorch (birch)
ⱄ	G	Gewa	Giba (gift)	ⱆ	Gifu (gift)
ⱅ	D	Daaz	Dags (day)	ⱇ	Daeg (day)
ⱆ	E	Eyz	Aihvus (a horse) or Eius (ivy)	ⱈ	Eh (horse)
ⱇ	F	Fe	Faihu (cattle, wealth)	ⱉ	Feoh (money)
ⱈ	J or soft G	Gaar	Jêr (year)	ⱊ	Gear (year)
ⱉ	H	Haal	Hagls (hail)	ⱋ	Haegel (hail)
ⱊ	I	Iiz	Eis (ice)	ⱌ	Is (ice)
ⱋ	K	Chozma	Kaunsama <sup>1</sup> ? (a torch or a boil)	ⱍ	Cen (torch)
ⱌ	L	Laaz	Lagus (lake)	ⱎ	Lagu (sea)
ⱍ	M	Manna	Manna (man)	ⱏ	Man
ⱎ	N	Noicz	Nauths (need)	ⱐ	Nyd (need)
ⱏ	U	Uraz	Urus (wild ox)	ⱑ	Ur (wild ox)
ⱐ	P	Pertra <sup>2</sup>	?	ⱒ	Peorth (chess-man)

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the most enigmatical names in the whole series. I would suggest the possibility that it may be imported from the Greek, and = καύσυμα or καύμα. All interpreters are agreed in connecting it with the idea of *burning*.

<sup>2</sup> From the Anglo-Saxon Rune-song we find that Peorth, the name of the prune, is connected with an in-door game. Kemble translates it 'chessman,' and Grimm suggests with some probability that it is the name of the piece which we call the queen, and the Persians *ferz* (= 'captain of the host'), altered by the French into *vièrge*, whence, through the idea of the Virgin Mary, the name of queen was introduced.



## NOTE C.

Gothic letter.	English equivalent.	Name according to Vienna MS.	Corrected Name.	Corresponding Rune.	Name in Anglo-Saxon Rune-song.
U	Q	Quertra	Quairthr (bait)		
R	R	Reda	Raida (carriage)	R	Rad (saddle or chariot)
S	S	Sugil	Sauil or sôjil (sun)	S	Sigel (sail) <sup>1</sup>
T	T	Tyz	Tius (the god of battles) <sup>2</sup>	↑	Tir (a god)
Y	V or W	Winne	Vinja (a meadow) or Vinna (pain)	Þ	Wen (hope)
X	O	Utal	Othal (native land)	⚫	Ethel (native land)
X	Ch	Enguz	Ingrus (a German hero)	⚫	Ing (a demi-god, first seen among the East Danes)
Z	Z	Ezet <sup>3</sup>	?		
⊙	Hw	Waer	Hwair (a kettle)		
ψ	Th	Thyth <sup>3</sup>	?	Þ	Thorn

I fear to trouble my readers (even in a note) with any details as to Gothic grammar: but some may perhaps care to see the declension of a Gothic noun and the conjugation of a Gothic verb, together with one or two well-known passages of the New Testament rendered into the language of Alaric.

Declension of *SUNUS*, a son.

	SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Nom.	Sunus	Sunjus.
Voc.	Sunu	Sunjus.
Acc.	Sunu	Sununs.
Dat.	Sunau	Sunum.
Gen.	Sunaus	Sunive.

<sup>1</sup> Kemble observes (*Archaeologia*, p. 345) that this rendering of Sigel is a mistake. 'This, which in all the Teutonic tongues denotes a gem or jewel—in a secondary sense the *Sun*—is here treated as if it were *Segel*, a sail.'

<sup>2</sup> *Tius*, in Norse *Tyr*, in Old High German *Ziu*, is the Teutonic Mars, after whom Tuesday was named.

<sup>3</sup> The names *Ezet* or *Ezet* and *Thyth* have given much trouble to philologists. Kirchhoff (*Das Gothische Alphabet*, p. vi) confirms the conjecture originally started by Grimm that these names are nothing but Gothic transformations of Zeta and Theta, the Greek names of the corresponding letters.

Conjugation of HABAN, *to have*.

NOTE C.

PRESENT INDICATIVE.		
SINGULAR.	DUAL.	PLURAL.
1. Haba	Habos	Habam.
2. Habais	Habats	Habaith.
3. Habaith		Haband.
PRETERITE INDICATIVE.		
1. Habaida	Habaidedu	Habaidedum.
2. Habaides	Habaideduts	Habaideduth.
3. Habaida		Habaidedun.
PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE.		
1. Habau	Habaiva	Habaima.
2. Habais	Habaits	Habaith.
3. Habai		Habaina.
PRETERITE SUBJUNCTIVE.		
1. Habaidedjau	Habaidedeiva	Habaidedeima.
2. Habaidedeis	Habaidedeits	Habaidedeith.
3. Habaidedi		Habaidedeina.
IMPERATIVE.		
		1. Habam.
2. Habai	Habats	2. Habaith.
ACTIVE PARTICIPLE	Habands.	
PASSIVE PARTICIPLE	Habaith.	

These, or similar to these, were the noble forms of speech used by our Teutonic forefathers in the pastures of Holstein. Now, by the wear and tear of centuries and by the eager haste of an unleisured people, such grand words as *habaideduth* and *habaidedeina* have been rubbed down to the insignificant *had*, alike for all moods and numbers of the past of *to have*. *Etiam periere ruinae*.

Our Lord's Prayer in the version of Ulfilas is as follows:—

Atta unsar thu in himinam veihnai namo thein, Qimai  
 Father our thou in the heavens hallowed be name thine. Let come  
 thiudinassus theins: vairthai vilja theins, sve in himina jah  
 kingdom thine: be done will thine, as in heaven and (also)  
 ana airthai. Hlaif unsarana thana sinteinan gif uns himma daga.  
 on earth. Loaf ours the enduring give us to-day.  
 Jah aflet uns thatei skulans sijaima, svasve jah veis afletam  
 And let-off us that of which debtors we may be so as also we let-off  
 thaim skulam unsaraim. Jah ni briggais<sup>1</sup> uns in fraistubnjai,  
 the debtors ours. And do not bring us into temptation,

<sup>1</sup> *gg* is always used by Ulfilas, as in Greek, with the power of *ng*.

NOTE C. ak lausei uns af thamma ubilin. unte theina ist thiudangardi.  
 but deliver us of the evil. because thine is king's-house  
 jah mahts jah vulthus in aivins. Amen.  
 and might and glory to ages. Amen.

The following is the parable of the Good Shepherd :—

Amen amen qitha izvis saei ni atgaggith thairh daur in  
 Verily, verily I say to you whoever not goes in through the door into  
 gardan lambe ak steigith aljathro. sah hliftus ist jah  
 the yard of the lamb but climbs up some other way, he a robber is and  
 vaidedja. Ith sa inngaggands thairh daur hairdeis ist  
 an evil doer. But the enterer in through the door herdsman is  
 lambe. Thammuh dauravards uslukith. jah tho lamba stibnai  
 of the lambs. To him the door-ward opens and the lambs the voice  
 is hausjand. jah tho svesona lamba haitith bi namin jah  
 of him hear, and (the) his own lambs he calls by name and  
 ustiuhith tho. Jah than tho svesona ustiuhith faura im gaggith.  
 leads out them. And when (the) his own he leads out before them he goeth,  
 jah tho lamba ina laistjand unte kunnun stibna is. Ith  
 and the lambs him follow because they know the voice of him. But  
 framathjana ni laistjand. ak thliuhand faura imma unto ni  
 a stranger not they follow, but flee before him because not  
 kunnun thize framathjane stibna.  
 they know of the stranger the voice.

The Christian Armour (Eph. vi. 14):—

Standaith nu ufgaurdanai hupins izvarans sunjai. jaggapaidodai  
 Stand now girdled round loins yours with truth and clothed  
 brunjon garaihteins. Jah guskohai fotum in manvithai  
 with the breastplate of righteousness. And shod the feet with readiness  
 aivaggeljons gavairthjis. Ufar all andnimandans skildu galau-  
 of the gospel of peace. Over all taking up the shield of  
 beinais, thammei maguth allos arwaznos this unseljins funiskos  
 faith, with which you may all arrows of the Evil one fiery  
 afwapjan. Jah hilm naseinai nimaith, jah meki ahmins,  
 quench. And the helmet of salvation take, and the sword of the Spirit  
 thatei ist vaurd Guths.  
 which is the word of God.

The vocabulary of the Goths throws an interesting light on many details of their daily life. As a Northern people their years are all counted by *winters*. Their word for fruit (*akran*) is essentially the same as our 'acorn.' Wealth is represented by

cattle, and *faihu* (connected with the German *vieh*), which NOTE C.  
originally meant cattle, forms part of the word *Faihu-thraihns*  
(hoard of treasure), which is chosen by Ulfilas as the Gothic  
equivalent of 'Mammon.'

But the imported words are almost more interesting than the indigenous ones. When John the Baptist is represented as saying to the soldiers, *Valdaith annom izvaraim*, 'Be satisfied with your rations,' we have surely in *annom* a remembrance of the Latin *annona*. And when we read (Matthew vi. 2) that the hypocrites *andnemun mizdon seina*, 'receive their reward,' we have before us in *mizdon* the Gothic equivalent of the Greek *μισθός*, a word which doubtless formed the subject of many a conversation, and the pretext for many a tumult, in the tents of the Gothic *foederati* in the Imperial armies.

## CHAPTER II.

JOVIAN, PROCOPIUS, ATHANARIC.

### Authorities.

*Sources:—*

**BOOK I.**    OUR chief authority for the reigns of Valentinian I and his  
**CH. 2.**    brother Valens is AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, who wrote, probably, between the years 380 and 390. His history concludes thus: 'These things have I as an old soldier and a Greek set forth to the best of my ability. Beginning with the sovereignty of Nerva and concluding with the death of Valens, my work professes to be truthful, and I have never intentionally deceived either by silence or by misrepresentation. Let others younger and more learned than I am write about subsequent events [the reign of Theodosius], but I must warn them that if they do so they will have to train their tongues to a higher style of eloquence than mine.'

In calling himself *Graecus*, Ammianus no doubt means that he was born in the Greek-speaking provinces of the Empire. An interesting letter (No. 983) addressed to him in his later life by the orator Libanius seems to prove that he, like the writer of the letter, was a native of Antioch. He seems to have been born about the year 330. He was of noble birth and probably of handsome person, being one of the *protectores domestici*, who, as Procopius says (Hist. Arc. c. 24), were generally selected on account of their beauty and good family. He himself, in describing one of his narrow escapes from his Persian pursuers, tells us that he soon found himself 'overcome by the weariness of the march, as being a Noble unaccustomed to such toil' (xix. 8, 6).



As a young officer he was attached to the staff of Ursicinus, BOOK I.  
governor of Nisibis, a general of whose qualities he speaks in CH. 2.  
terms of high praise and whose fortunes he followed for some  
years. In this general's train he visited Milan in 354, Cologne  
in 355, and Cilicia in 359. Returning to Nisibis with his  
patron, he took part in the campaign of Amida (359), and had  
many interesting adventures therein, which are recorded in his  
history. In the following year Ursicinus lost his office owing  
to the intrigues of his enemies. Ammianus may possibly at the  
same time have lost the favour of the Emperor, Constantius,  
but under his successor, Julian, we find him again employed in  
an honourable position. He took part in Julian's expedition  
against Persia (363), and probably stood with his brother-officers  
of the Guard by the death-bed of the Emperor. After his  
return from this expedition his history gives us no indication of  
his movements, except that he was dwelling in Antioch at the  
time of the so-called 'Conspiracy of Theodorus' (371), and saw  
the tortures then inflicted on the accused.

It seems probable that some of the later years of his life were  
spent at Rome, and that it was there that he composed the  
greater part of his History. The letter of Libanius referred to  
above, which was written in 390 or 391, is addressed to him at  
Rome, and mentions his having recited part of his History amid  
general applause, which, as Libanius expected, would be bestowed  
not less liberally on the still unpublished portions of the work.  
Though the History itself ends with the death of Valens (378),  
it contains allusions to subsequent events which bring down the  
date of composition to 390. 'It is remarkable,' says Sievers (in  
his *Life of Libanius*, p. 272), 'that no distinct allusion of Am-  
mianus carries us beyond the year 390.' We have however no  
certain information as to the date of his death.

The History of Ammianus, which was divided into thirty-one  
books, treated of the events of 282 years, from the accession of 96-378.  
Nerva to the death of Valens. Unfortunately we possess only  
eighteen of these books, containing the history of twenty-five 353-378.  
years, beginning soon after the overthrow of Magnentius.  
Though it is clear that the period from Trajan to Constantine  
must have been described in much more summary fashion than  
the reigns of Constantine and his successors, still the loss of  
those first thirteen books is one of the greatest which the

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

student of history has to deplore. The great Emperors of the Aelian and Antonine dynasties have been singularly unfortunate in their lack of a fitting chronicler of their deeds. In the geographical digressions which Ammianus delights to indulge in, he doubtless gave some valuable information as to the infancy of the Teutonic nations, from whom so many of the inhabitants of modern Europe are descended; and few writers could have given us so valuable an insight as he would have done into the terrible convulsions of the third century, the principles of Diocletian's reorganisation of the State, and the manner in which the change of the national religion was brought about by Constantine. Though he was apparently a Pagan he speaks generally without bitterness, and sometimes almost with respect, of Christianity.

The style of Ammianus has been much, and justly, blamed. It is laboured, pompous, often obscure; and it contains some of the longest and strangest words which can be found in any Latin author. But in fairness it ought to be remembered that Latin was not his native tongue, that he had spent more than half of his life in Greek-speaking countries, and that his training had probably been that of a soldier rather than of a rhetorician. And even the rhetoricians of the fourth century spoke a very different language from that of Livy and Cicero.

The student, however, who goes to Ammianus not for style but for thought, will certainly not be disappointed. He has great power of describing character and a quick eye for social peculiarities: in fact, some of his pictures of Roman manners are worthy to have been painted by Juvenal himself. He speaks of natural phenomena and of the marvels of foreign lands with something of the childlike wonder of Herodotus. Above all, he shows everywhere a hearty admiration of honest men and a genuine hatred for oppression. None can travel far under the guidance of Ammianus without feeling that he may be safely trusted to tell the whole truth so far as he knows it.

Another important authority for the history of this period is ZOSIMUS (fifth century?), whose History will be described hereafter.

The orator THEMISTIUS gives us some valuable information as to the events of this period. Themistius, surnamed *Εὐφραδής*,

'the Eloquent,' was probably born in 317, the birth-year of the Emperor Constantius, with whom he seems to describe himself as co-eval. He was a native of Paphlagonia, and was sprung from honourable, if not noble, ancestors. His father Eugenius was a philosopher of some eminence. He studied rhetoric and philosophy in the neighbourhood of Trebizond, or perhaps in that city itself. He early acquired a high reputation as a commentator on Aristotle, and coming to Constantinople (probably between 344 and 347) he gathered round him an enthusiastic band of disciples, to whom he taught his favourite science, philosophy, and his favourite art, rhetoric. He asserts that he never took fees from his pupils, but rather out of his modest fortune assisted them in their necessities, and he therefore considered that he had a right to disclaim the title of Sophist.

The works of Themistius, which are of historical value, are his 'Political Speeches,' the first of which was delivered before Constantius in 347, and the last before Theodosius about 385. These harangues attracted the favourable notice of the Emperors and brought him high honours. In 355 he was enrolled in the Senate of Constantinople. In 357 a bronze statue was erected in his honour: and in 361 he appears to have been appointed Praetor, though the language of the ordinance which seems to confer this dignity upon him is somewhat obscure. In one of his orations he declares that on account of his oratorical (perhaps also his linguistic) skill, he might, if he had chosen, have had permanent diplomatic employment as the representative of the Empire at the Persian Court. In 376 he was sent by Valens on business of state to his nephew Gratian in Gaul, and returning by way of Rome he was received with marked honour by the nobles of that city, and strongly pressed to remain among them, but he preferred to return to Constantinople. In 384 he was appointed to the high honour of Praetorian Prefect of Constantinople, which however he held for only a short time, owing to his enfeebled health. He died probably soon after 385.

It is remarkable that though Themistius was an out-spoken votary of the old religion of Hellas<sup>1</sup>, he enjoyed the favour of the

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to find Themistius twice quoting a passage from the Old Testament as to the king's heart being in the hand of God, and ascribing it to 'the Assyrian writings' (Orations vii and xi, pp. 89 and 147). 'But I formerly ob-

BOOK I. Christian Emperors, Constantius, Valens, and Theodosius, in a  
CH. 2. scarcely less degree than that of the heathen Julian. Probably this was owing to the fact that he consistently pressed the doctrine of toleration both on heathen and Arian Emperors: and this circumstance was not forgotten when the orthodox party came into the possession of supreme power. There was even some talk of his being entrusted with the education of Arcadius, the young son of Theodosius, but it does not appear that this was actually done.

In the opinion of Photius (who was no contemptible judge of Greek literature), the style of Themistius is 'clear, free from redundancies, and [yet] flowery: and he uses state-paper-like words which have a somewhat solemn sound.' A modern critic may venture the opinion that his style is less turgid than might have been expected from the age in which he wrote<sup>1</sup>. Though he is profuse and audacious in his flattery of reigning Emperors, he is honourably distinguished from many of the vapid tribe of panegyrists by the amount of real historical information which it is possible to extract from the stream of his rhetoric, and he often contrives to blend with his flattery some maxim of eternal righteousness or some useful hint as to the dangers which threatened the Empire.

*Guides:—*

Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Smith's edition; London, 1854.

Tillemont, *Histoire des Empereurs*. (Vol. 5, Paris, 1701: Vol. 6, Paris, 1738.)

Clinton, *Fasti Romani*. (Oxford, 1845.)

A reference to these three authors may be presumed for every chapter, and almost every page, of the present volumes. An occasional query as to the correctness of some minor detail in

served that even the Assyrian writings elegantly remark that in sooth the mind of the king is guarded in the hand of God. . . . I indeed, oh dear companions (do not let any one denounce me to the over-wise for saying so), have often admired many other things in the Assyrian writings, but this maxim I pre-eminently admire and praise. For those writings say somewhere that the king's heart is guarded in the hand of God.' Was this genuine or affected ignorance, or is it possible that Themistius had access to some sources of Oriental literature now closed to us? The passage quoted is to be found in Proverbs xxi. 1.

<sup>1</sup> He is exceedingly fond of introducing quotations from Homer.



Gibbon's History will not be misconstrued into dissent from the general verdict of admiration for his work. The accuracy in outline and, for the most part, in detail of so vast a panorama of human history is the more extraordinary, in view of the generally uncritical character of English scholarship in the latter part of the eighteenth century. One of the points for which later writers have reason to be most grateful to Gibbon is the clear and full statement of the authorities upon which each paragraph is based. This having been done once for all, in a book which is easily accessible to every student, absolves those who come after from quoting with the same fulness of detail, except when some point seems to require special illustration.

For a perfect digest of all the authorities bearing on every fact in Roman Imperial history we naturally turn to Tillemont, who devoted the patient industry of a life to his two great works, *Mémoires Ecclesiastiques*, and *Histoire des Empereurs*. Form, the great beauty of Gibbon's work, is utterly absent from Tillemont's mass of useful materials, annalistically arranged. But often when gratefully appreciating the helpfulness of this book—helpfulness all the greater, as it seems, on account of its complete absence of style—I have thought how great would be the advantage if the facts of some much-discussed period of English history—say the Reformation, the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, or the Great Rebellion—could be, with perfect accuracy, chronicled Tillemont-fashion for eloquent writers on both sides to work up afterwards as they pleased into the proper literary form.

Fynes Clinton, in his well-known book, the *Fasti Romani*, has analysed with extreme industry and care all the important dates in the earlier history of the Empire. The book—superior in this respect to that of Tillemont—is printed with an accuracy which approaches very nearly to perfection. A student who carefully follows Clinton's method, and verifies his quotations, soon feels that he may rely with almost absolute certainty on the correctness of his conclusions.

Of these three absolutely indispensable guides to the history of a world-important crisis, an English reader may reflect with permissible pride that two are his own fellow-countrymen.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.



BOOK I.  
CH. 2.Death of  
Julian.  
26 June,  
363.

Its results.

Discord  
between  
Eastern  
and  
Western  
soldiers.

THE death of Julian at the very crisis of his campaign against Sapor, King of Persia, was followed by events which illustrated in a striking manner the weakness of such an elective monarchy as the Roman Commonwealth had now become. The dead Emperor left no son, and the race of Constantine died with him.

In these circumstances the right of the soldiers to choose the Imperator on the field of battle, a right which always existed in theory and which was only kept in practical abeyance by such expedients as the 'association' of a son with his Imperial sire, now revived in full force. The position of the invading army on the eastern bank of the Tigris, cut off from its base of operations and deprived of the great leader whose courage had breathed confidence into every soul, was difficult but not desperate. It might have been thought that, from the mere instinct of self-preservation, soldiers in such a position would have selected the fittest soldier to lead them home victorious: yet never was a leader chosen more absurdly unfit to grapple with the responsibilities of his new position than he who actually assumed the diadem. There was jealousy between the two main divisions of the army, the Eastern and the Western; between the comrades who after Julian's victory over the Alamanni had proclaimed him Augustus at Paris, and the opponents who, but for the timely death of his colleague Constantius, would have found themselves actually fighting against the brilliant Apostate. During his lifetime, the genius and the popularity of Julian had smothered these discords; but now upon his death they were on the point of breaking out into a flame. Here, at the head of the Gaulish legions, stood Nevitta

and Dagalaiphus—their very names told their barbarian origin; there, leading the debate on behalf of the legions of Constantius, were Victor and Arintheus. The discussion was so fierce between them that it might seem as if the horrors of civil war would soon be added to scarcity of provisions and all the other dangers of the Romans' position in the heart of the enemy's country.

This peril was averted when both parties agreed to offer the diadem to Sallust, the Praetorian Prefect of the East, deservedly the most trusted of the military counsellors of the deceased Emperor. In an evil hour for the State, if wisely for his own tranquillity, Sallust refused the honour, pleading sickness and old age as sufficient reasons against taking the weight of empire on his shoulders. It was important that a choice should be speedily made, before the flame of dissension between East and West could flash up again; though one soldier of distinction<sup>1</sup> proposed, with some show of reason, that the generals should consider themselves as lieutenants of the dead Julian till they had brought the troops safely back within the limits of the Empire, and then outside one of the cities of Mesopotamia 'by the united suffrages of both armies elect a legitimate Emperor.' This proposal did not find favour, but some one suggested the name of Jovian, which was eagerly echoed by a few noisy partisans; and without reflection, almost without enquiry whom they meant by that name, JOVIAN was elected.

There were two men in the host, each of some little note in his way, bearing the name of Jovian. One,

<sup>1</sup> 'Honoratior aliquis miles.' Very likely Ammianus himself, as Gibbon suggests.

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The  
diadem  
offered to  
Sallust.

Jovian  
Emperor.

Which  
Jovian?

BOOK I. who held the rank of *notarius*, had been some months  
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before a leader of the brave band of men who burrowed through the secret recesses of a mine under the walls of Maiozamalcha<sup>1</sup>, and emerging suddenly in the middle of the city had slain all its defenders who came in their way, and opened the gates to the besiegers.

Somewhat higher in rank, but less known for any deed of valour, was Jovian, the colonel of a regiment of the guards<sup>2</sup>. He was son of Varronianus, a Count who had served the State with some credit and had recently retired into private life. He was tall, blue-eyed, of a cheerful countenance, fond of exchanging good-natured pleasantries with his comrades of the camp; but, except his handsome presence and his father's respectable career, there seems to have been no reason whatever why he should have been chosen to rule. However, when the name of Jovian was mentioned,—perhaps with a view to the elevation of the hero of Maiozamalcha<sup>3</sup>,—his messmates, interpreting it of their well-born and genial fellow-officer, hailed it with acclamations. He was soon robed in the purple,—the only difficulty being that it was hard to find a robe of the Imperial colour large enough for his giant limbs,—and was hurried along the four miles' line upon which the soldiers were drawn up, with shouts from his new subjects of 'Jovianus Augustus.' How little the mass of the

The wrong  
Jovian pro-  
claimed.

<sup>1</sup> So the correct text renders the name of this city, which was formerly written Masyomalcha. Ma'oz-Melech (מְעֹז-מֶלֶךְ), the Hebrew equivalent of 'king's fortress,' is very similar to this, the correctly written form of the name.

<sup>2</sup> 'Domesticorum ordinis primus.'

<sup>3</sup> This is the impression left on our minds by the language of Ammianus, xxv. 8. 18.

army understood what they were doing was proved by the fact that, misled by the similarity of name, many supposed that Julian was still alive and had recovered from his wound, and that it was he, their old commander, who was being hailed by these shouts of welcome. Only when, instead of the pale face and upright figure of the somewhat undersized Julian, they saw the tall stooping form and ruddy good-humoured countenance of his guardsman, did they fully comprehend the change which a few hours had wrought in the hand that was to guide the destinies of the Empire.

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The whole story of Jovian's election reminds us of one of those sudden changes of fortune and unexpected compromises which have often marked the proceedings of a Conclave assembled for the choice of a Pope. But the interests at stake were probably greater than have ever been involved in the discussions in the Vatican—the hastening or the delay of the downfall of the Roman Empire, a point to be gained or lost in the contest of thirty centuries between Europe and Asia.

As soon as Jovian was robed in the purple, there began that unavowed competition between the interests of the State and the interests of the Dynasty which our own generation, having witnessed the capitulation of Sedan and the surrender of Metz, can so easily understand. The Imperial army was still formidable to the Persians, and whenever it met them in the field it inflicted severe losses upon them. The friendly province of Corduene was—so we are assured—only 100 miles distant to the North, and from that district there was reason to hope that another large division under Sebastian and Procopius was advancing to join the Roman host. Notwithstanding the great

The interests of the new Emperor clash with those of the Empire.



BOOK I. and undeniable difficulties of the commissariat, all  
CH. 2.

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Jovian's  
jealousy of  
Procopius.

these considerations pointed to a rapid northward march up the eastern bank of the Tigris. The river would at least supply them with water, and if the ranks of the soldiers were to be thinned, it was surely better that they should die fighting than starving. But at every suggestion of this kind the flatterers of Jovian whispered in his ear the terrible name of *Procopius*<sup>1</sup>, who was not only one of the generals of the advancing army, but a kinsman of the just deceased Emperor and a most likely person to be selected by a mutinous soldiery as a rival claimant to the throne. Thus that very junction of forces which, from a military point of view, was the one thing supremely to be desired for the Roman army, was the one thing to be supremely dreaded by the Roman Emperor.

Sapor  
informed of  
the death  
of Julian.

In this state of affairs any proposals for peace coming from the Persian camp were sure of a favourable reception. Sapor, who had been profoundly impressed and dispirited by the rapid and successful march of Julian, recovered his confidence on the receipt of joyful tidings from a Roman deserter. This deserter, a standard-bearer of the legion called Joviani, had carried on a kind of hereditary feud with Varronianus and his son, and now preferred exile in Persia to the perils which must impend over the enemy of the Emperor. He informed the King that the foe whom he so greatly feared had breathed his last, and that 'a crowd of horse-boys had raised to the shadow of Imperial authority a guardsman named Jovian, a man of soft and indolent disposition.' Such was the aspect

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus, xxv. 7. 10: 'Adulatorum globus instabat timido principi, Procopii metuendum subserens nomen.'



which the tumultuary election of a Roman Emperor might easily be made to wear. At the same time, other deserters from the Imperial host conveyed the terrible suspicion—one which could not be positively refuted though it entirely lacks confirmation—that Julian had fallen not by a Persian but a Roman javelin, hurled perhaps (but the historian does not himself suggest this) by a Christian hand.

Though elated by this welcome news, Sapor had seen enough of the fighting capacities of the Imperial army, even within the last few days, to make him desirous to build 'a bridge of gold for a retreating foe.' Yet from the soft and inert Jovian he saw that it would be possible to wring terms of lasting advantage for Persia. He therefore sent to the Roman camp the general who bore the title of Surena and another noble of high rank to announce, that from motives of humanity he was willing to spare the remains of the invading army, and permit them to return in safety to their own land if the following conditions were accepted by them. Five provinces on the upper waters of the Tigris and Euphrates, which had been won from Persia by Galerius, were now to be restored. The great city of Nisibis, which had with scarcely any interruption belonged to the Roman Empire since the time of Trajan and which had been the great *entrepôt* of the commerce of East and West, was to be surrendered to Sapor: and the cities of Singara and Castra Maurorum with fifteen fortresses were to share the same fate. Last and most ignominious condition of all, Arsaces, king of Armenia, who had dared to ally himself with Rome against Persia, was to be abandoned to the vengeance of 'the King of Kings.'

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363.

He offers  
terms of  
peace.

Surrender  
of five  
provinces.

Of Nisibis  
and other  
fortresses.

Abandon-  
ment of  
the King of  
Armenia.

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363.

The terms  
accepted.

Jovian  
begins his  
homeward  
march.

Against such terms as these even Jovian struggled for four days, precious days, during which the provisions of his army were being rapidly consumed.

Then he yielded, having obtained only one concession from the Persian, that the inhabitants of Nisibis and Singara might be allowed to depart from those cities, and the Roman garrisons to leave the fortresses before their surrender. The treaty was then signed, a treaty of peace for thirty years; hostages were given on both sides, and Jovian, being permitted to cross the Tigris without molestation, commenced his march across the wasted and waterless plains of Mesopotamia. After a journey of seventy miles, occupying six days, a time of terrible hardship both for the soldiers and their horses, the army received, at a city called Ur, a supply of provisions sent for their use by the generals Sebastian and Procopius. The facts that the two armies were within such comparatively short distance of one another, and that after all, famine, the great enemy of the retreating host, had to be encountered, just as if no treaty had been signed, seem to form the strongest possible condemnation of an arrangement, the real object of which was to secure the diadem for Jovian, at whatever cost to the Empire.

Jovian at  
Nisibis.

Before long the new Emperor and his army stood under the walls of Nisibis. Fame, swifter than the couriers whom Jovian had sent into all parts of the Empire to announce his accession, had divulged the humiliating terms of the treaty by which he had purchased an unmolested return. The citizens of Nisibis still cherished a faint hope that their prayers might prevail upon him to forego the execution of that article of the treaty in which they were concerned. But this

hope grew fainter when they observed that Jovian remained in his camp, pitched outside the walls of their city, and although pressed, steadfastly refused to enter the palace which had been visited by a long line of his predecessors, from Trajan to Constantius. Men said then that he blushed to enter the gates of the impregnable city which he was about to surrender to the enemies of Rome.

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It was probably because the new Emperor perceived the murmurs of discontent which were excited in the army by the complaints of the people of Nisibis, that on the first night of his sojourn before the city he ordered a deed of cruelty to be committed which was little in accordance with his usual easy good-nature. The other Jovian, the hero of Maiozamalcha, was said to have invited some of the officers repeatedly to his table, and at these repasts to have made indiscreet allusions to the fact that he too had been spoken of as a candidate for the purple. He was hurried away at nightfall to a lonely place, hurled down a dry well, and his body covered with stones.

The other  
Jovian put  
to death.

Next day Bineses, Sapor's Commissioner, entered the city and displayed the banner of Persia from the citadel, a signal to all who wished to remain Roman citizens that the time had come when they must abandon their homes. With chaplets in their hands the inhabitants poured forth to the Imperial tent and besought the Emperor not to surrender them against their will to the power of Persia. They did not ask for assistance: with their own soldiers and their own resources they would fight for their ancestral homes as they had often done before. To this petition, which was urged in the name of the municipal Senate and

The  
citizens of  
Nisibis  
implore  
Jovian to  
break  
the treaty.

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Brave  
words of  
Sabinus.

people of Nisibis<sup>1</sup>, the Emperor would only reply that he had sworn to the treaty and could not, to gratify them, incur the guilt of perjury. Then Sabinus, president of the Senate of Nisibis, took up the discourse and spoke in somewhat bolder tone. 'It is not right,' said he, 'oh Emperor, to abandon us, nor compel us to make trial of barbarian customs after we have been for so many centuries fostered by the Roman laws. In three wars with the Persians, Constantius was saved from ruin by the valour of our city, which resisted to the last extremity of peril on behalf of the Empire. He recognised the obligations which this constancy laid upon him. When the fortune of war went desperately against him, when he had to flee with a few followers to the insecure shelter of Hibita, when he had to live on a crust of bread offered to him by an old peasant woman, still he surrendered not a foot of Roman territory: while you, oh Emperor! signalise the very commencement of your reign by the surrender of a city whose defences from of old have been inviolate by the enemy<sup>2</sup>.' Still the Emperor refused to listen to the impossible petition, and pleaded, as he was bound to plead, the necessity of observing his plighted faith. He refused the crown which the citizens had brought him, but at length, overcome by their importunity, allowed it to be placed on his head, whereupon an advocate named Silvanus with a bitter taunt exclaimed, 'So, oh Imperator, may you be crowned by all the other cities of your realm.' Jovian understood

<sup>1</sup> 'Haec quidem suppliciter ordo et populus precabatur' (Amm. Mar. xxv. 9. 2).

<sup>2</sup> I have tried to combine in one the narratives, substantially very similar, of Zosimus (iii. 33-34) and Ammianus (xxv. 9).



the sneer, and exasperated by the unwelcome fidelity of the citizens, would concede only the short space of three days within which those who refused to accept the condition of Persian subjects must leave the precincts of Nisibis.

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363.

Three days  
of grace,  
only,  
allowed to  
the  
citizens.

Then one universal cry of misery went up from the despairing city. Matrons with dishevelled hair bewailed their hard fate in being compelled to abandon the ancestral hearths by which their infancy had been spent. Some, more unhappy, had to contemplate life-long separation from the husband or the children whom necessity forced to remain behind. Everywhere a weeping crowd filled the streets, touching with loving hands the very doorposts and thresholds of the houses which they had known so long and were never to revisit. Soon the roads were filled with the throng of fugitives carrying with them such part of their household furniture as their strength enabled them to remove, and sometimes leaving articles of great price behind, in order to transport some commoner possession which its associations had endeared to them<sup>1</sup>. Most of the emigrants betook themselves to Amida, the nearest town on the Roman side of the new frontier: but she and all her sister-cities were filled with lamentation, all men fearing that they would be exposed, defenceless, to the raids of the Persians, now that the great barrier-city of Nisibis had fallen.

Lamenta-  
tions of the  
citizens of  
Nisibis.

They  
migrate to  
Amida.

I have dwelt at some length on the circumstances attending the abandonment of this city of Nisibis,

Story of  
Nisibis  
shows the

<sup>1</sup> This is probably the meaning of Ammianus' words, 'properando enim multi furabantur opes proprias, quas vehi posse credebant, contemptâ reliquâ suppellectili pretiosâ et multâ:' but it must be admitted that they need some amplification.



BOOK 1.  
CH. 2.

363.  
attaching  
power of  
Rome.

because they illustrate the nature of the connexion which existed between the one great civilised World-Empire and its members. Here was a city erected upon the highlands of Mesopotamia; whose river, after a devious course, flowed into the Euphrates. From its walls Tigris could perhaps be descried gleaming upon the eastern horizon. It was doubtless essentially Asiatic in its character: its citizens spoke the Aramaic tongue of Hazael and Benhadad; those who were most closely connected with Europe and had the most successfully assimilated the Western civilisation, might at the utmost be familiar with the Greek language which had been learned by the subjects of Seleucus and Antiochus. Yet these Orientals clung with passionate devotion to the name of Romans, and asked for nothing better from their rulers than to be allowed to fight for their connexion with the far-off City by the Tiber. In the course of this history we shall often come across cruel cases of oppression by Roman governors; we shall often have to trace the desolating presence of the Roman tax-gatherer; we shall sometimes hear the suggestion that even subjection to the barbarian is better than the exhausting tyranny of Roman prefects. But this is not the abiding, the universal conviction of the subjects of the Empire. Their own old feelings of nationality have long ago been laid aside, and to them the Empire, or as they call it 'the Commonwealth of Rome,' is home; loved, notwithstanding all its faults, and not to be abandoned without passionate lamentation.

General acquiescence in Jovian's election.

As for Jovian, his action as Emperor scarcely extended beyond the cession of the five Mesopotamian provinces. With nervous haste he sent his messengers all over the Empire announcing his own accession and the salutary

peace which he had concluded with Persia ; and notwithstanding a mutiny at Rheims, in which his father-in-law and newly-appointed commander-in-chief, Lucillianus, was slain, his election was upon the whole tranquilly accepted by all the legions and provinces of the Empire. Procopius, who met him at the last stage before Nisibis, was charged to escort the dead body of Julian to Tarsus<sup>1</sup>, and there to pay the last rites to the memory of his deceased kinsman. This done, he who well knew the suspicion with which he was regarded, discreetly vanished for a time from the eyes of men. Jovian entered Antioch, but stayed not long there, being terrified by omens and annoyed at the lampoons of the citizens. At Tarsus he visited and adorned the tomb of his predecessor. At Angora, which he had reached by the commencement of the new year, he exhibited himself to his subjects dressed in the robe of a Consul. By his side, as his colleague, sat his son Varronianus, a little child, whose screams as he was carried in the curule chair were deemed an evil augury for the new dynasty of Jovian. And in fact before seven weeks of the new year had passed, that short-lived dynasty perished. At the obscure town of Dadastana, in Bithynia, Jovian died suddenly in the night. Some said that the newly-plastered walls of his chamber in the road-side *mansio* caused his death ; some, an over-heated stove ; some, a too-hearty meal eaten on the previous evening. It is only certain that the inglorious life of the new Emperor was ended, in

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Death of  
Jovian,  
Feb. 16,  
364.

<sup>1</sup> Julian's reason for selecting Tarsus as his destined burial-place was probably that his mother's family resided there. We are told that his kinsman Procopius was 'in Ciliciâ natus et educatus' (Ammianus, xxvi. 6).

BOOK I. his thirty-third year, and that not even in that age of  
 CH. 2. suspicion was any hint uttered that his death was  
 364. due to the contrivance of an enemy.

Assembly  
 at Nicaea  
 for election  
 of new  
 Emperor.

Aequitius  
 proposed,

and  
 Januarius.

Valen-  
 tinian  
 elected,

Thus then the throne of the world was again vacant, and the act of election performed eight months before on the plain of Dura had now to be repeated in Bithynia, but this time in a more leisurely manner and with less danger of a mistaken choice. At Nicaea, the capital of Bithynia, the city at which, thirty-nine years before, the great Parliament of Christianity had assembled<sup>1</sup>, there were now gathered together the chiefs of the civil and military administration in order to discuss the all-important question of a successor to the vacant throne. All men felt that the crisis was a grave one for the Empire: but where there was so little to indicate upon whom the choice would fall, many went with high hopes which were doomed to disappointment. Sallust probably took the first place in the deliberating council. First was proposed the name of Aequitius, a man who held a somewhat similar position in the household troops to that of Jovian<sup>2</sup>: but his rough temper and clownish manners caused him to be rejected. Then Januarius, a relative of Julian, who was Marshal of the Camps<sup>3</sup> in Illyricum, was suggested as a fit wearer of the purple: but to communicate with him in distant Illyricum seemed to involve too dangerous a delay. When the name of another guardsman, VALENTINIAN, was proposed, it was hailed with unanimous approval, and the suggestion was greeted as the result of heaven-sent inspiration. It is true that even he was absent, at

<sup>1</sup> The Council of Nicaea: 19 June—25 Aug. 325.

<sup>2</sup> 'Scholae primae Scutariorum tribunus.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Comes rei castrensis.'

Angora, in Galatia: but ten days sufficed to take thither the news of his elevation and to bring him back to the camp. The day on which he returned being that on which the intercalation for Leap Year was made<sup>1</sup>, was deemed unlucky by the superstitious Romans, and consequently no proclamation was then issued: but, on the following day, the army was drawn up on the plain of Nicaea, and beheld upon a lofty tribunal the stately form of the new Emperor.

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and pro-  
claimed  
Emperor,  
Feb. 27,  
364.

Valentinian, like so many of the best and strongest rulers of Rome in the third and fourth centuries, like Claudius, Aurelian, Diocletian, and Constantine, came from the central (Illyrian) portion of the Empire, between the Danube and the Adriatic. He had no long line of noble ancestors to boast of. His father Gratian, born of obscure parentage at Cibalæ on the Save, appeared when a lad in the army of some Roman general and offered a rope for sale. Five soldiers set upon him with the rough horse-play of the camp and tried to wrest his precious rope from him, but to their amazement he resisted them all. From that day Gratianus Funarius<sup>2</sup> was a well-known name in the camp, and his extraordinary personal strength, combined with skill in wrestling, secured his rapid advancement in the military career. He became guardsman<sup>3</sup>, tribune, and Marshal of the Camps, which latter high position he held in the province of Africa. Here however a suspicion of embezzlement led to his dismissal: but either the suspicion was unjust or his repentance procured his pardon,

Valen-  
tinian's  
parentage.

His father,  
Gratian.

<sup>1</sup> 26th February. Bissextile appears to have been a second 26th of February, not the 29th.

<sup>2</sup> Gratian the rope-seller.

<sup>3</sup> Protector.



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for at a later period he again held the same office in the province of Britain. At the end of a long and generally honourable career he retired to his native town of Cibalae, where, however, he again fell into some degree of disfavour with the reigning Emperor (Constantius), owing to the hospitality which he afforded to the usurper Magnentius.

Previous  
career of  
Valen-  
tinian.

The son of Count Gratian possessed his father's strength and heroic stature, and of course started in life with greater advantages than had fallen to that father's share. In 357 Valentinian was a cavalry officer, holding an important command in Gaul, where the misunderstandings arising from Constantius' jealousy of his cousin Julian for a short time, and most undeservedly, clouded his military reputation and caused him to receive an unwelcome furlough. With the triumph of Julian, if not before, his time of inactivity ended: but he again lost for a little while the favour of the Emperor, owing to the roughness with which he exhibited his Christian contempt for the somewhat fussy religiousness of his heathen master. At some ceremony in the temple of Antioch, at which military duty required his attendance in the train of the Emperor, a heathen priest sprinkled Valentinian the life-guardsmen with the lustral water of the gods. He made a disdainful gesture, and cut off with his sword the part of his military cloak which had received the undesired aspersion. The philosopher Maximus (apparently) played the ignoble part of an informer, and Valentinian, for this contempt of the Emperor's religion, was for a few months deprived of his commission. Before long, however, he was again following the Imperial standards, the temporary



hindrance to his fortunes being abundantly compensated by the lustre which now attached to his name in the eyes of all believers, as, if not a martyr, at least a confessor of the Christian faith.

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Such was the past history of the fortunate 'Tribune of the second Schola of Scutarii,' or as we should say Colonel of the Second Regiment of Guards, who now, in the forty-fourth year of his age, was presented to the assembled troops on the plain outside Nicaea to receive the acclamations which would make him Emperor. His tall and sinewy frame, the light colour of his hair, the blue-gray tint of his sternly-glancing eyes, spoke probably of an admixture of Teutonic blood in the veins of the Pannonian peasant, his father: but there was also somewhat of classical beauty in his features. With all the many and grievous faults in his character which history reveals to us, Valentinian was a born king of men, and one who, when presented to an assembly of soldiers as their leader, was certain to win without difficulty their enthusiastic applause<sup>1</sup>. The acclamations were duly uttered, the purple was hung around his shoulders, the diadem was placed upon his head, and the new Augustus prepared to harangue his soldiers. But even while he was in act to speak, a deep sound, an almost menacing murmur, rose from the centuries and maniples of the army, 'Name at once another Emperor.' Some thought that the hint was given in the interest of one or other of the disappointed candi-

The acclamation.

He is called upon to name a colleague.

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus' description of the personal appearance of Valentinian (who is almost one of his heroes) is very striking: 'Corpus ejus lacertosum et validum, capilli fulgor colorisque nitor, cum oculis caesiis semper obliquum intuentis et torvum, atque pulchritudo staturae liniamentorumque recta compago majestatis regiae decus implebat' (xxx. 9. 6).

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His  
harangue  
to the  
army.

dates; but it is more probable that the military parliament really aimed, in its own rough way, at promoting the good of the state, and wished to prevent the recurrence of such another disaster as that which, by the impact of one Persian javelin, had transferred the whole power of the Roman commonwealth from a Julian to a Jovian. At once, however, the high spirit of the new Emperor revealed itself, and the soldiers learned that they had given themselves a master. In few but well-chosen words Valentinian thanked the brave defenders of the provinces for the supreme honour which, without his expectation or desire, they had conferred upon him. 'The power which but an hour ago was in their hands was now in his; and it behoved them to listen while he set forth what he deemed to be for the welfare of the state. The need of a colleague he felt, perhaps more strongly than any of them, but the absolute necessity of harmony between the rulers of the world weighed even more strongly upon his mind. It was by concord that even small states had grown to great strength, and without it the mightiest empires must fall in ruin. Such a colleague as would work in full harmony with himself he trusted that he might find, but he must not be hurried in the search, nor compelled at a moment's notice to utter the irrevocable word that would bind him to a partner whose disposition he would only begin to study when it was too late to turn the knowledge of his character to account.'

The harangue produced its desired effect in the minds of the soldiers. Those who had been most eager in demanding the immediate association of a colleague admitted the reasonableness of the plea for delay.

The eagles and the banners of the different legions clustered emulously round the new Emperor, and escorted him, already with the awful aspect of dominion in his countenance, to the Imperial palace <sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
364.

The deliberations of the new Emperor with himself concerning his future colleague did not occupy many days. Already, it is probable those who were best acquainted with his temper saw to what conclusion his words about the necessity of harmony pointed. On the morrow after his elevation he called a council of the chief officers, and asked if they had any advice to give him as to the association of a partner in his throne. All the rest were silent, but Dagalaiphus, the brave Teuton from the Gaulish provinces, said: 'If you love your own family, most excellent Emperor, you have a brother. If you love the State, seek for the worthiest and clothe him with the purple.' The Emperor showed that he was offended, but dismissed the assembly without disclosing his purpose. On the first of March, when the legions entered Nicomedia, he promoted his brother Valens to the dignity of Tribune of the Imperial Stables. Before the end of the month, at the building known as the Hebdomon <sup>2</sup>, he presented

Associa-  
tion of  
Valens  
in the  
Empire.

March 28,  
365.

<sup>1</sup> 'Circumsaeptum aquilis et vexillis agminibusque diversorum ordinum ambitiose stipatum *jamque terribilem* duxerunt in regiam' (Amm. xxvi. 11).

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, following Tillemont and Ducange, makes the Hebdomon 'the field of Mars, distant from Constantinople either seven stadia or seven miles.' It is now however generally identified with the building known as the *Tekfour Serai*, or Palace of Belisarius, situated in Blachernae, a northern suburb of the city, and at a later period included within its walls. The name Hebdomon (Seventh) is said to be derived from the fact that the seventh division of the garrison was stationed there. After a careful consideration of the passages quoted in Ducange's *Constantinopolis Christiana*, I feel some doubt whether

BOOK I. Valens to the troops, arrayed in purple and diadem,  
 CH. 2. and declared him Augustus. The needful, the ap-  
 364. parently unanimous, applause was given, for none dared  
 face the stern glance of the elder Augustus, and the  
 two brothers rode back to Constantinople in the same  
 car of state.

Appear-  
 ance and  
 character  
 of Valens.

Of VALENS, the new occupant of the Imperial throne, there is but little to be said, except that he was one of those commonplace men whom a hard fate has singled out for a great position, as if on purpose to show the essential littleness of their souls. He possessed neither the manly beauty nor the soldierly qualities of his brother. Of moderate stature and swarthy skin, bandy-legged, somewhat pot-bellied, and with a slight cast in his eye, he could boast of nothing in his outward appearance which might compel the beholder to forget the meanness of his extraction. In action he was tardy and procrastinating, and yet, as we shall see, on one memorable occasion his ignorance of the elements of the problem before him led him to commit an act of almost inconceivable rashness. He was excessively tenacious of the dignity which he had so undeservedly acquired, and his suspicion of all whom he supposed to be plotting to deprive him of it, led him into a course of most cruel tyranny. Yet in the ordinary detail of

this is the whole explanation of the matter. There may have been such a Hebdomon situated at Blachernae, but so many of the authorities, some of them contemporary, speak of 'the seventh milestone,' that I think there must also have been a Hebdomon seven miles from the city. It is to be wished that the archaeologists of Stamboul would carefully examine the site to see whether there are any remains of an important building at that distance from the city. Mr. Bury (*History of the Later Roman Empire*, ii. 556) also places the Hebdomon not at Blachernae but by the Sea of Marmora.



government he displayed some praiseworthy qualities. He was a lover of justice towards all except the supposed pretenders to his throne. Though avaricious, and by no means scrupulous as to the means of replenishing his treasury, he was also, by an unwonted combination of qualities, very careful of his subjects' financial prosperity, never imposing a new tax, but relieving, whenever he could, the weight of the old imposts; so that Ammianus, who writes with no friendly feeling towards him, declares that 'never in matters of this sort was the East more leniently dealt with than under his reign<sup>1</sup>.' It should be added here, for it had an important bearing on the whole course of his reign, that he was a bigoted and sometimes a persecuting Arian, while his brother Valentinian held the Nicene faith, but refused to persecute either heretics or heathens.

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The one chief merit of the public life of Valens was his unswerving loyalty to the brother who had raised him to the throne. 'He attended to his wishes as if he had been his orderly<sup>2</sup>,' says Ammianus, with a little contempt. Yet surely, in the circumstances of the Roman Empire, complete harmony between its rulers was a boon of the highest value, and the feebler, poorer, nature of Valens was right in leaning on the strong arm of Valentinian. The events which actually occurred caused the fraternal partiality of the elder

Fraternal  
harmony of  
the new  
Emperors.

<sup>1</sup> 'Nec sub alio principe in hujusmodi negotiis melius secum actum esse meminit Oriens' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 14. 3). Several points of this historian's elaborate description of the character of Valens remind me of our Henry VII.

<sup>2</sup> 'In modum apparitoris morigerum' (Amm. xxvi. 4. 3). We ought surely to read thus, not apparitoris as in Gardthausen's text.



BOOK I. brother to be in the highest degree disastrous to Rome.  
CH. 2.

364.

Yet it was a great matter to avert such terrible and exhausting wars as had been waged between Constantine and Licinius, as had been all but waged between Constantius and Julian. Had it not been for the accident of the premature death of Valentinian, the world might have had no cause to regret his association of Valens with himself.

Partition  
of the  
Empire.

Thus then was the whole Roman world subject to the two sons of the rope-seller of Cibalae, and they now proceeded to divide its wide expanse between them. Very soon after the ceremony of association they had both fallen sick of a dangerous fever, but having recovered from this illness (which was falsely attributed by some to the machinations of the friends of Julian) they left Constantinople near the end of April, and travelling slowly, reached, at the beginning of June, Naissus, now the Servian city of Nisch. Here, or rather at the villa of Mediana, three miles out of the city, the brothers remained for a little over a fortnight, arranging the details of the great partition. The Gauls, Italy, and Illyricum were taken by Valentinian, the city of Milan being chosen as his residence in time of peace. The Gaulish army of Julian with its officers, among whom was the brave and outspoken Dagalaiphus, fell naturally to his share. On the other hand, the Prefecture of the East, which included not only Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, but the eastern half of Thrace and Moesia, was marked out as the portion of Valens, who ruled it from his capital of Constantinople, but who also often resided at Antioch, especially when there was danger of war on the Persian horizon. The highest military officers

of Valens were Victor and Arintheus ; his Prefect and chief adviser in civil matters the veteran Sallust, who, as we have seen, might easily have worn the diadem himself. There seems to have been much marching and counter-marching of the legions between East and West before all these arrangements were finally completed and before each Emperor had his own army satisfactorily quartered in his own dominions.

Soon after the accession of Valentinian a deed of wickedness was wrought by his orders. The eyes of the hapless child Varronianus, his predecessor's son, were put out, as we are told, 'from fear of what might happen in the future, though he had done no wrong <sup>1</sup>.' A grievous illustration truly of the cruelty of which the new Byzantine state-craft could be guilty, notwithstanding its external profession of Christianity; and no less striking an evidence of the conflict in men's minds between the elective theory and the increasingly hereditary practice of the Imperial succession—a conflict which might cause even the infant son of a ten-months' Emperor to be hereafter a source of danger to the state.

This conflict of theories, and the miserable position into which it often brought the relatives of a deceased sovereign, were the causes of an event which greatly occupied the minds of men in the early years of the new Emperors, and had an important bearing on the attitude of the Goths to Rome ; namely, the rebellion of Procopius. This man, the descendant of a noble family in Cilicia, of unblemished character, who had attained to respectable if not pre-eminent rank both in

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CH. 2.

364

The eyes  
of the son  
of Jovian  
put out.

Adven-  
tures of  
Julian's  
kinsman,  
Procopius.

<sup>1</sup> Chrysostom, 15th Homily.

BOOK I. the civil and military service of the state<sup>1</sup>, had now  
 CH. 2.  
 364. to live the life of a fugitive, like David when proscribed by Saul, hunted 'as a partridge on the mountains,' simply because there were rumours, doubtful and obscure, that his cousin Julian had secretly presented him with a purple robe, or had named him, on his death-bed, as a suitable successor. After the death of Jovian of Maiozamalcha had shown to all men the jealous character of his Imperial namesake, Procopius, as has been already said, thought it safer to disappear for a time from the common haunts of men. He retired at first to his estates near the Cappadocian Caesarea, and when an order was sent to that place for his arrest<sup>2</sup> he feigned submission to his fate, but obtained leave to see his wife and children before his departure. A sumptuous banquet was prepared for his captors, and in the night-time, while they were sleeping the sleep of drunkenness, Procopius contrived to escape with some of his followers and to reach the shore of the Euxine. Taking ship he sailed to the Crimea, and there lived for some months in poverty and wretchedness, probably on the uplands in the interior. Weary at length of this squalid mode of life, doubtful if the barbarians would keep his secret faithfully, and longing to hear again the civilised speech of Greece or Rome, he ventured forth from his hiding-place and came by devious roads to Chalcedon on the Bosphorus, where two faithful

<sup>1</sup> 'Notarius diu perspicaciter militans et tribunus, jamque summatus proximus' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 6. 1).

<sup>2</sup> By Valentinian and Valens says Zosimus (iv. 5). But Ammianus, the better authority, seems to refer these events to the reign of Jovian.

friends alternately permitted him to take shelter in their houses<sup>1</sup>. From hence occasionally venturing to creep forth, effectually disguised by the changes which hunger and hardship had wrought in his face, he listened to the talk of the citizens, and learned their growing discontent. It was by this time the summer of 365. Valentinian and Valens had been for more than a year upon the throne, and in the Oriental Prefecture, at least, there was deep dissatisfaction with their rule. The faithful Sallust had been thrust aside, and Valens had appointed his father-in-law, Petronius Probus, Prefect in his room. This man, suddenly advanced from an obscure to a lofty position, crooked in body and mind, and apparently delighting in the sorrows of his fellow-men, was, by his administration, spreading dismay through all classes of the community. The innocent and the guilty were alike subjected to judicial torture, and so remorseless was his vindication of the claims of the Exchequer that, as men said, he seemed as if he would go back a century to the days of Aurelian, to hunt for arrears of unpaid taxes<sup>2</sup>.

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CH. 2.

365.

Discontent  
at Constantinople.

270.

To internal discontent was added the menace of external invasion. All round the frontiers of the Empire, the tidings of the death of the mighty Julian and of the disgraceful peace concluded by his successor had profoundly stirred the hearts of the barbarians. The Alamanni, a great and strong

Troubles  
from the  
barbarians.

<sup>1</sup> Strategius, Senator and ex-guardsmen (Amm. xxvi. 6. 5), and Eunomius the heretic (Philostorgius, ix. 5. 8).

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus' words, 'debita jam inde a temporibus principis Aureliani perscrutans,' can hardly, it seems to me, be taken as literally exact. How could the liability to arrears be thus enforced over a whole century?



BOOK I. confederacy who were dominant on the upper Rhine.  
CH. 2.

365.

had resumed their ravages in Raetia and Gaul: in Pannonia, the Sarmatians (a generic term for the Slavonic peoples) and the Quadi were roaming at their will: four barbarous nations, the Picts, the Scots, the Atacotti and the Saxons, were vexing the romanised Britons with continual miseries: the incursions of the Moors into the province of Africa were more than usually destructive: lastly, and most important for our present purpose, the Goths, strong and prosperous after their long peace with Rome, and apparently disposed to consider that their *foedus* with the Emperor Constantine bound them no longer, now that strangers to his blood ruled at Milan and Constantinople, were overrunning the nearer parts of Thrace with their predatory bands<sup>1</sup>. There was probably also some rumour of impending difficulty with Persia, and we find that Valens was marching in haste to Antioch, when the news of the Gothic inroad caused him to send back a sufficient force of cavalry and infantry to the places threatened by their attack.

Owing to these various causes there was great disorganisation in the Eastern Prefecture, and the capital was bare of the regular troops upon whose

<sup>1</sup> I have here translated almost verbatim an important passage of Ammianus (xxvi. 4. 5), combining with it two others. The sentences specially relating to the Goths are these: 'Thracias et diripiebant praedatorii globi Gothorum' (l. c.); 'Valens . . . docetur relationibus ducum gentem Gothorum eâ tempestate intactam ideoque saevissimam, conspirantem in unum ad pervadenda parari conlimitia Thraciarum' (xxvi. 6. 11); 'Quod et Gothorum tria milia regibus jam lenitis ad auxilium erant missa Procopio, *Constantianam praetendenti necessitudinem*' (xxvi. 10. 3).



fidelity Valens might safely have relied, when at last Procopius, weary of his outcast life, and thinking that death itself would be better than the hardships which he had recently endured, determined to make a throw of the dice for empire.

Two Gaulish legions, the Divitenses and the Junior Tungrians, were on their way to their quarters in Thrace, and had to spend two days at Constantinople. Probably there was already some dissatisfaction among these troops at being removed from their homes in the West in order to serve in a dangerous and profitless campaign on the banks of the Danube. However this may have been, the daring spirits among them were accessible to the lavish offers made by the desperate Procopius, and promised for themselves and their comrades to aid him in his designs upon the throne. The necessary and hurried interviews took place under cover of the night, a night so dark and still that the ministers of Valens had not the slightest hint of what was going forward, and that, in the daring language of a heathen orator<sup>2</sup>, even Jove himself must be deemed to have slumbered. When morning dawned there was a general concourse of the rebel officers and soldiers at the baths of Anastasia<sup>3</sup>, and there the troops beheld the person whom they were to hail as the new Augustus. They saw a man of about forty years of age, tall of stature, but stooping (probably from his long-continued sedentary occupa-

BOOK 1.  
CH. 2.  
365.

Two  
Gaulish  
legions  
gained over  
by Pro-  
copius.  
Sept. 28,  
365<sup>1</sup>.

Proclama-  
tion of  
Procopius.

<sup>1</sup> We get this date for the commencement of the insurrection of Procopius from the 'Descriptio Consulium' which bears the name of Idatius.

<sup>2</sup> Themistius, Oration vii. (p. 91, ed. Paris).

<sup>3</sup> So named from the sister of Constantine.

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CH. 2.

365.

tion), looking like a clerk rather than a general, and with the shy downcast glance of one who had been for years a hunted fugitive. There he stood, the pale and ghost-like pretender, with one thought uppermost in his mind: 'Since my death is decreed, let me choose the steepest and shortest road into the abyss<sup>1</sup>.' The Imperial wardrobe was yet unransacked, and the only garments that could be procured were singularly unfitted to the majesty of an Augustus. In a gold-embroidered tunic which reached only to his knees, with purple buskins on his feet, and a spear in his hand from which fluttered a purple ribbon, he looked like a tragedy-king on the orchestra of a theatre<sup>2</sup>. However, he forced a smile to his pallid and anxious face: with honeyed words he fawned upon the authors of his greatness; and donative, promotion, high office were promised lavishly to the various ranks of his supporters. He then marched through the streets of Constantinople, the soldiers around him forming a *testudo* of shields over his head to guard him from darts or stones that might be hurled from the house-tops. However, no attack was made; no sign of favour or opposition was given by the multitude, and through the strange silence of the streets Procopius and his satellites marched to the *tribunal* before the palace<sup>3</sup>, from which the Eastern Emperors were wont to address their subjects. Here he long stood silent, chilled and awed

<sup>1</sup> 'Procliviorē viam ad mortem, ut sperabat, existimans advenisse (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 6. 18).

<sup>2</sup> There is a considerable general resemblance between the descriptions of Ammianus (xxvi. 9. 11) and Themistius (l. c. p. 90).

<sup>3</sup> *Εἰς τὰ βασιλεῖα προΐει λαμπρὸς, ἀνελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὸ πρὸ τῆς αὐλῆς βῆμα* (Zosimus, iv. 6). 'Cum itaque tribunal escendisset Procopius' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 6. 18).

by the silence of the populace. At length words came to his parched tongue, and he spoke of his relationship to the great Emperor who had fallen. Probably also he now began to ply the populace with the same kind of promises of material advantage which had proved effectual with the soldiers. Debts were to be abolished; lands were to be redistributed; all the demagogue's easy generosity at others' expense was freely exercised<sup>1</sup>. The bait took; the thin applause of the hired partisans was echoed at length by the hearty acclamations of the crowd, and Procopius could now truly assert that he had been hailed as Emperor by the people, or at least by the mob of Byzantium. After a somewhat discouraging visit to the Senate-house, from which all the noblest Senators were purposely absent, he entered the palace which had once been the abode of his cousin Julian, and which was to be his official residence for eight months from this time.

BOOK I.  
Ch. 2.

365.  
Oration of  
Procopius.

For in truth the elevation of Procopius, though viewed with disapprobation by the official classes and attended by some circumstances which moved the laughter of contemporary historians, was by no means a contemptible movement, but one which was very near attaining a signal success. The two great Praetorian Prefects, of Constantinople and of the East, appointed by Valens, were at once thrown into prison, and the Urban Prefecture and the important dignity of Master

The move-  
ment at  
first suc-  
cessful.

<sup>1</sup> Themistius is very clear as to the Socialistic policy affected by Procopius: "Ἀντικρυσ τὰ Πλάτωνος τοῦ θεσπεσίου, καὶ ἃ φησιν ἐκεῖνος προδεικνύει τοὺς τυράννους ἐν τοῖς προσιμίοις, χρεῶν ἀποκοπὰς, γῆς ἀναδασμούς, τὴν ἐπὶ Κρόνου καὶ Ῥέας εὐδαιμονίαν, πικρὰ δελεάσματα τοῖς ὑπὸ τούτων ἀλισκομένοις (l. c. p. 91). Zosimus also gives the same impression: Καὶ πληρώσας ἐλπίδων καὶ ἀδρῶν ὑποσχέσεων ἀπαντας (iv. 6, p. 179, ed. Bonn).

BOOK I. of the Offices were bestowed on two Gaulish officers <sup>1</sup>,  
 CH. 2. doubtless belonging to the mutinous legions which had  
 365. placed Procopius on the throne. Troops were raised;  
 the legions on their way to the Gothic war were  
 stopped and easily persuaded to enlist under the new  
 Emperor; and, more important, 3000 of the Goths  
 themselves were found willing to serve under the  
 banners of one who held himself forth as the kinsman  
 of their great ally the Emperor Constantine <sup>2</sup>.

Procopius' relation-ship to the family of Constantine.

This tie of relationship to the great Flavian house, a tie of a very slender kind and which probably in truth connected him with none but Julian himself, was insisted upon by Procopius and his adherents on every possible opportunity. Constantius had left a widow named Fausta and an infant daughter named Constantia. Whenever he addressed the troops the new Emperor was accustomed to carry Constantia 'his infant kinswoman' in his arms, and Fausta wearing the purple robes of an Augusta appeared by his side.

Receipt of the tidings by Valens.

Meanwhile the tidings of these strange and unexpected events reached the two brothers who were the rightful possessors of the sovereign power; and characteristically different was the manner of their reception. While all the hucksters and costermongers <sup>3</sup> of Constantinople were rejoicing over the accession of the people's friend, a few of the more influential citizens

<sup>1</sup> Phronemius and Euphrasius.

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus raises the Gothic contingent to 10,000, and speaks as if they actually served under Procopius, ἡδὴ δὲ τῶν ἐπιφανῶν τινὰς ἔστειλλε πρὸς τὸν ἔχοντα τὴν ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἰστρον Σκυθῶν ἐπικράτειαν ὁ δὲ μυρίους ἀκμάζοντας ἔπεμπε συμμάχους αὐτῷ (p. 180).

<sup>3</sup> 'Cupediarum vilium mercatores' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 7. 1).



who deemed that any turn of Fortune's wheel would be safer than the present strange condition of affairs, slipped out of the capital, and by hurried journeys sought the absent Emperor of the East. First of the fugitives to arrive was Sophronius, then only a notary, in after years Prefect of Constantinople. He found Valens at the Cappadocian Caesarea, about to depart thence to Antioch in leisurely ignorance of the danger to his crown. When he heard what had happened at Constantinople, stupefied with terror and bewilderment he turned aside into Galatia to await further tidings. For some weeks each post brought worse and worse reports from the capital; and Valens was reduced to such a depth of despondency that only the urgent entreaties of his nearest friends prevented him from resigning the purple and taking up that load of exile with its attendant dangers and hardships which Procopius had only just laid down. At length, however, braver counsels prevailed; and with two legions, the Jovian and the Victorious, he marched to Bithynia to meet his rival.

Valentinian was in Gaul, drawing near to the city of Lutetia Parisiorum<sup>1</sup>, when, on a certain day near the end of October, two messengers from different quarters bearing evil tidings reached him at once. One informed him that the Alamanni had refused with indignation the gifts offered to their ambassadors, 'gifts smaller and cheaper than had ever been given them before,' had cast them on the ground, and were in full career for the Gaulish frontier, breathing destruction and revenge<sup>2</sup>. The

Receipt of  
the tidings  
by Valen-  
tinian.

<sup>1</sup> Paris.

<sup>2</sup> 'Alamanni cum legatis eorum missis ad comitatum certa et praestituta ex more munera praeberi deberent, minora et vilia sunt



BOOK I. other had to communicate a vague and uncertain  
CH. 2. rumour of the revolution effected a month before by  
365. Procopius at Constantinople. The tidings came from  
the brave and faithful Aequitius, Governor of Illyricum,  
the same who had been himself proposed as a can-  
didate for the purple, whose staunch loyalty probably  
now saved the dynasty of Valentinian, since the Illyrian  
provinces, firmly held by him for his master, and with  
the three chief passes leading into the Oriental Diocese<sup>1</sup>  
strongly garrisoned, interposed an impenetrable barrier  
against the designs of the Procopians. But even this  
faithful servant had heard so dim and inaccurate a  
history of what had passed at Constantinople that  
his messenger could not say whether Valens were still  
alive or dead.

The first impulse of Valentinian was to march at  
once to the East to deliver or to avenge his brother.  
His nearest counsellors, however, ventured to represent  
to him the miseries which the barbarians during his  
absence on this expedition would inevitably inflict on  
the defenceless provinces of Gaul. The choice was a  
difficult one, and the matter was set in various lights  
by different advisers; but the strong, if stern and rigid,

*adtributa, quae illi suscepta furentes agentes ut indignissima projecere* '  
(Amm. Mar. xxvi. 5. 7). The descendants of the Alamanni in modern  
Switzerland sometimes go through a similar pantomime when gifts  
which they deem too small and cheap are tendered to them by  
travellers.

<sup>1</sup> 'Pariaque deinde metuens [Aequitius] obstruxit tres aditus  
angustissimos, per quos provinciae temptantur arctoeae, unum per  
ripensem Daciam, alterum per Succos notissimum, tertium per Mace-  
donas quem appellant Acontisma' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 7. 12). These  
three routes are by the Danube, by the 'Iron Gate' across the  
Balkan, and by the coast of the Aegean, Acontisma being eight miles  
from Neapolis, the port of Philippi.

mind of Valentinian was arrested by this thought, to which he several times gave utterance, 'Procopius is the enemy only of me and my brother, while the Alamanni are the enemies of the whole Roman world.' Not a single soldier—this was his conclusion—should leave the limits of Gaul. The spirit of the great days of the Republic, the spirit of Regulus and of Sulla<sup>1</sup>, was after all not yet dead in the hearts of Romans.

Thus it came to pass that Valens had to conduct the struggle with Procopius, unaided by Valentinian, and through the autumn and winter of 365–6 the usurper, thus enabled to concentrate his force, was upon the whole so successful, that it seemed as if his revolutionary diadem might be transmitted to his descendants. We can with some effort discern what was the division of parties and interests between the two claimants for the Empire of the East, and what the rallying cry of each faction and the taunts which it hurled at its opponents. On the side of Valens seem to have been immovably ranged all his fellow-countrymen from the Pannonian provinces, and these probably included the best and bravest officers in the Imperial army<sup>2</sup>. As before hinted, the senators and the official classes of Constantinople seem to have been for the most part ranged on

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
365.

Rallying  
cries of the  
partisans of  
Valens and  
Procopius  
respect-  
ively.

<sup>1</sup> 'Triumphant Sulla! thou who didst subdue  
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldest pause to feel  
The weight of thine own wrongs, or reap the due  
Of hoarded vengeance till thy legions flew

O'er prostrate Asia.' (Childe Harold, iv. lxxxiii.)

<sup>2</sup> 'Serenianus . . . ut Pannonius sociatusque Valenti domesticorum prae-  
fuit scholae' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 5. 3). 'Adtente providebat Aequi-  
tius et cum eo Leo . . . exercitus universi judicium . . . ut Pannonii  
fautoresque principis designati firmantes' (ibid. i. 6).

BOOK I. the same side, dreading a civil war between East and  
 CH. 2. West, and doubting Procopius' power to consolidate  
 365. his position.

The adherents of Procopius were to be found among the lower orders at Constantinople, attracted by his promises of a redistribution of property; among the sufferers from the unjust exactions of Petronius; among the officers of the two mutinous legions for whom his success was a matter of life and death; and among all those newly created Prefects, Counts, and Tribunes, whom, after the custom of revolutions<sup>1</sup>, this sudden turn of the wheel had raised from nothingness to power<sup>2</sup>.

Vadomar  
 and  
 Hormisdas. We note with interest the names of two men of  
 360. kingly origin who took sides in this civil strife of an Empire to which they were aliens. Vadomar, king of the Alamanni, having been deposed and made prisoner by Julian, had taken service under the Emperors of Rome, from whom he received the office—a singular one for a Teutonic chieftain—of Duke of Phoenicia: and he was now employed by Valens in an unsuccessful siege of Nicaea. On the other hand, the young Hormisdas, of the royal seed of Persia, whose father, an exile from his country, had visited Rome in the train

<sup>1</sup> 'Utique in certaminibus intestinis usu venire contingit, emergent ex vulgari faece nonnulli, desperatione consiliisque ductantibus caecis, contraque quidam orti splendide a culminibus summis ad usque mortes et exilia conruebant' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 7. 7). This might have been written as a description of France in 1792 and 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly also the party which still cherished the traditions of heathenism rallied round Procopius, the kinsman of Julian. But Tillemont does not seem to me to have *proved* the Paganism of Procopius: and had he decidedly favoured the old religion, surely Ammianus and Themistius would have spoken more kindly of him than they do.

of Constantius, and guided through Mesopotamia the cavalry of Julian, now received from Procopius the office of pro-consul, and with his wife narrowly escaped capture by the soldiers of Valens<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

365.

The partisans of Valens were loud in their invectives against 'the moody Cilician misanthrope who might have been satisfied to pass his life in the condition of a notary and scribe, but who had left his desk and his ink-horn in order to take on himself the vast burden of the Empire of Rome<sup>2</sup>:' while the adherents of Procopius were prepared with the easy retort that their opponents were fighting for a base-born Pannonian; and when Valens appeared under the walls of Chalcedon, its defenders assailed him with loud and bitter cries of 'Sabaïarius,' a word which by a slight anachronism we might translate 'Bavarian-beer-drinker<sup>3</sup>.'

Mutual  
invectives.

The war was confined to Asia Minor, and chiefly to the north-western portions of it. Nicaea, as has been said, was in vain besieged by the troops of Valens, while Cyzicus, to which the soldiers of Procopius laid siege, and whose harbour had been closed by an iron boom, was taken by the valiant Aliso, who having ordered his men, standing and kneeling in their boats, to form a *testudo*, himself with a mighty blow of his

Sieges of  
Nicaea and  
Cyzicus.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tanto vigore evasit [Ormizdas] ut escensâ navi, quam ad casus pararat ancipites, sequentem ac paene captam uxorem sagittarum nube diffusâ defensam averteret secum: matronam opulentam et nobilem, cujus verecundia et destinatio gloriosa abruptis postea discriminibus maritum exemit' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 8. 12). It would be interesting to know more of the events thus glanced at by Ammianus.

<sup>2</sup> "Ἀνθρωπος ἐν ὑπογραφίῳς αἰὲ μοίρα διαβίου ἐκ τοῦ μέλανος καὶ τῆς καλαμίδος ἐτόλμησεν εἰς νοῦν ἐμβαλέσθαι τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν (Themistius, Or. vii. p. 86).

<sup>3</sup> 'Est autem Sabaia ex hordeo vel frumento in liquorem conversis paupertinus in Illyrico potus' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 8. 2).



BOOK I. axe cut the boom in sunder. Procopius at first showed  
CH. 2.

365.  
The arti-  
fices of  
Procopius.

considerable cleverness—of no very exalted kind—in playing the game of an usurper. Sham-messengers, dusty as if from a long journey, but really coming in from the suburbs of Constantinople, announced the death of Valentinian and the defeat of Valens. Sham-embassies from Persia, Egypt, Africa, proclaimed the alliance or the subjection of nations at the ends of the earth<sup>1</sup>. When he met the troops of his rival drawn up for battle by the river Sangarius, he suddenly remembered, or feigned to remember, an old comrade in a certain Vitalianus, who was conspicuous in their ranks, and advancing to meet him with outstretched hand, uttered a short harangue recalling the glories of his kinsman Julian and pouring scorn on the degenerate Pannonian. The result of this well-played comedy was that the soldiers lowered their standards and their eagles, clustered round Procopius, and escorted him back to his camp, swearing by Jove (as from long habit Roman soldiers still swore) that Procopius should be for ever invincible<sup>2</sup>.

The tide  
turns,  
366.

But success made Procopius idle : the falsehood of the rumours as to Valentinian's death before long became manifest, and soon after the beginning of 366 the tide, we cannot say of battle, but of treason, turned. Supplies were running short with the usurper. The populace of Constantinople complained that the *annona*, or daily largess of bread, was not given with the

<sup>1</sup> Themistius, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> 'Testati more militiae Jovem invictum Procopium fore' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 7. 17). Doubtless the 'Justiniane Imperator, tu vincas' of 160 years later was a survival from this military acclamation. Did it begin 'Obtestor Jovem?'



accustomed liberality<sup>1</sup>—a surer evidence than all the pretended ambassadors whom Procopius could parade through the streets of the capital, that the great corn-producing province of Egypt was not on his side. The senators were loaded with grievous imposts, and advantage was taken of the turn of the year to collect two years' taxes in one month. And the usurper himself, instead of pushing forward to complete the victory achieved at Cyzicus, lingered in the cities of Asia, and held vague consultations with persons skilled in gold-mining as to the possibility of extracting from the bowels of the earth the gold which he needed for the war.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
366.

Military discipline and the reverence for tried and veteran officers began to assert itself more and more even in the ranks of the mutineers. When the great commander Arintheus arrived at the Phrygian town of Dadastana<sup>2</sup> he found the troops of the enemy at that place commanded by a certain Hyperethius, who had previously held no higher office than that of butler to the Marshal of the Camp<sup>3</sup>. Disdaining to fight with such an adversary he strode forth between the two armies and in a loud voice commanded his former soldiers to bind the menial who dared to call himself their captain; and such was the old instinct of obedience to the voice of Arintheus that they obeyed. To this instinct Valens now determined to make a powerful appeal against the continually urged argument of Procopius' relationship to Julian. To the childish graces of the

Old  
generals  
on the  
side of  
Valens.  
Arintheus.

<sup>1</sup> Themistius, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> The place where Jovian had died.

<sup>3</sup> 'Antehac rectoris Castrensis adparitorem id est ventris ministrum et gutturis' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 8. 5).

BOOK I. little Constantia, borne in the arms of her self-styled  
 CH. 2. cousin, he determined to oppose the white hairs of  
 366. the veteran Arbetio. This man, who had risen from  
 Arbetio. the condition of a common soldier to the highest commands in the army, had served with credit in the campaigns of Constantius and Julian. His military fame was eminent, though he was little better than a shifty intriguer in civil affairs. He had worn the robes of a consul in 355 and had even been accused under Constantius of aspiring to the Imperial purple. He had now retired from active service, but, in so great a crisis of the fortunes of the state, each party hoped that the sly old veteran would intervene on its side. Elated by his apparent prosperity Procopius foolishly showed his impatience at the delays and vacillation of Arbetio, and ordered his house at Constantinople, which was full of furniture of priceless value, to be burned<sup>1</sup>. From that moment, as might have been expected, Valens had no more devoted adherent than Arbetio, who was the very man that was required to win back to military obedience the mutinous legions, disgusted with the promotion of butlers and copying-clerks to high commands in the army.

Battle of  
Thyatira.

In the spring of 366 Valens, who had been reinforced by a large body of soldiers under the command of Lupicinus, his Master of the Horse, led his army from their quarters on the confines of Phrygia and Galatia, westwards through the defiles of Olympus into the province of Lydia<sup>2</sup>. Here Arbetio joined him, and here

<sup>1</sup> See Ammianus, xxvi. 8. 13. The story, as he tells it, suggests a parallel with Absalom's similar outrage on Joab (2 Samuel xiv. 29-33).

<sup>2</sup> 'Praeter radices Olympi mentis excelsi tramitesque fragosos ire

before long on the plains of Thyatira, the two armies met in battle. The impetuous valour of Hormisdas threw the line of the army of Valens into confusion, and had all but won the day for Procopius. But the general on that side was Gumoarius or Gumohar, long ago seen through by Julian as a hoary old traitor<sup>1</sup>, but whom Procopius had unwisely entrusted with one of the chief commands in his army. Gumohar had undoubtedly been gained over by Arbetio, though there is a slight divergence of testimony as to the precise means by which he carried into effect his treacherous designs. According to one account<sup>2</sup> he suddenly raised the cry, 'Augustus! Augustus!' The password was re-echoed by all the officers who were in the conspiracy, and all who thus shouted passed over, with shields reversed and spears shaken to and fro in sign of surrender<sup>3</sup>, into the camp of Valens. The other story makes Arbetio the chief actor in the scene<sup>4</sup>. Suddenly appearing before the rebel troops and claiming the hearing to which his high military rank and white hairs entitled him, he assailed Procopius with loud reproaches as an insolent intruder on the Imperial dignity, and besought the soldiers who had been led away by his artifices, the men who had been partners with himself in many toils and dangers, and who were dear to him as his own

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

366.

Treachery  
of Gumo-  
har.

tendebat ad Lyciam' (Amm. Mar. xxvi. 9. 2). It is clear that Lycia is wrong; and it seems to me simpler to suppose a mere clerical error by which it has been substituted for Lydia than to adopt the ingenious conjecture of Gibbon who refers to the Lycus, the river of Thyatira.

<sup>1</sup> 'Gumoarium proditorem antiquum timens [Julianus]' (ibid. xxi. 8. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus, iv. 8.

<sup>3</sup> This detail from Amm. Mar. xxvi. 9. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Amm. Mar. xxvi. 9. 5.

BOOK I. sons, to follow him, their parent, rather than that  
 CH. 2. abandoned scoundrel who was already on the brink of  
 366. ruin. The appeal was successful: the soldiers followed  
 their old leader: Gumohar conveniently contrived to  
 be taken prisoner, and the general, with the best part  
 of the troops of Procopius, were soon quartered as  
 friends in the camp of Valens.

Procopius  
 deserted by  
 his troops  
 at Nacolia. Procopius fled, not to Constantinople but into Phrygia  
 where there were still some legions following his standard.  
 Agilo who commanded this portion of the army was an  
 old comrade of Arbetio, and was easily persuaded to  
 follow the example of Gumohar. The armies met near  
 the city of Nacolia: the comedy of an appeal to old  
 memories of common service was probably again en-  
 acted, and the remnant of the troops of Procopius  
 entered the service of his rival. The revolution had  
 begun with a military pronunciamiento, and was ended  
 by a movement of the same kind but in the opposite  
 direction. Procopius fled from the field, not of battle  
 but of surrender, to the mountains, and was accom-  
 panied by two officers, Florentius and Barchalba. The  
 too early rising moon favoured the pursuers rather  
 than the pursued, the hope of escape became desperate,  
 and suddenly his two companions hoping to purchase  
 their safety at his expense, sprang upon him and  
 bound him with cords. At daybreak they brought  
 him to the Emperor's camp, silent and with the old  
 gloom upon his face deeper than ever. His head was  
 at once severed from his body<sup>2</sup>, and it is with some

Flight of  
 Procopius.

His death.  
 27 May<sup>1</sup>,  
 366.

<sup>1</sup> This is the date according to Idatius. The Alexandrian Chronicle gives 20th of June.

<sup>2</sup> The statement of Socrates (repeated by Zonaras and some other writers) that Procopius was put to death by being bound to two bent



satisfaction that we read that for want of adequate de-  
liberation Florentius and Barchalba shared the same  
fate.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
366.

The rebellion of Procopius was thus at an end, but his  
kinsman Marcellus, an officer of the household troops,  
who appears to have been one of his most capable  
helpers and who commanded the garrison of Nicaea,  
assumed the purple and endeavoured to prolong an  
ineffectual resistance. He put to death Serenianus, one  
of the chief advisers of Valens, who had been taken  
prisoner and lodged within the walls of Nicaea. He  
also occupied Chalcedon, and began to negotiate with the  
Gothic leaders for the support of the 3000<sup>1</sup> men whom  
they had sent to the aid of Procopius. But before he  
could consolidate his forces, Aequitius, who had led an  
army out of Illyricum through the pass of Succi and  
who was busied with the siege of Philippopolis, sent a  
small but daring band of soldiers, who caught him,  
we are told, 'like a fugitive slave,' and brought him  
into the presence of Aequitius. He was cruelly flogged  
and tortured and then put to death<sup>2</sup>. The garrison of  
Philippopolis still continued stubbornly to defend that  
city, not believing the report of the death of Procopius,

After-  
rebellion of  
Marcellus.

trees and torn asunder by their recoil is justly rejected by Tillemont  
(v. 693).

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus (xxvi. 10. 3) gives the number of Gothic auxiliaries to  
Procopius at 3000. Zosimus says they were '10,000 men in the  
prime of their vigour.' I think we must consider Ammianus the  
better authority, but there is nothing in itself improbable in the  
statement of Zosimus.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus makes no mention of Marcellus till after the death of  
Procopius, but in the pages of Zosimus he figures as one of the greatest  
generals of the usurper. As both historians are good authorities for  
the history of this period, this is a good illustration of the danger of  
founding any argument on the mere omission of a name.



BOOK I. and it was only upon the actual sight of the head of the  
 CH. 2. usurper, which was being borne in ghastly triumph to  
 366. Valentinian in Gaul, that they most unwillingly consented to its surrender.

Thus then had fallen Procopius, 'the Emperor of a winter'<sup>1</sup> as he was now called in derision by the flatterers of success. Valens apparently soon returned to Constantinople, and here perhaps in the early months of 367, sitting in the Senate-house, he listened to the flattering harangue of the orator Themistius, to which we are indebted for much of our knowledge of the baffled revolution.

Oration of  
 Themistius.

Though we know with what sycophancy in all ages power is worshipped, whether it reside in an autocrat or a mob, we could hardly have expected that Themistius would have ventured on some of the topics of praise which he has chosen, and which must have seemed like ridicule to those who knew the facts of the late campaign. He enlarges on the courage of Valens, who apparently never met the foe in open fight; on his constancy and unshaken firmness, when but for the entreaties of his counsellors he would have resigned the purple; on the magic of his name, which at thirty furlongs distance caused the soldiers of his rival to desert to his standards, when that act of treachery was really due to the white hairs of Arbeto, and the machinations of Gumohar. Looking however beneath the surface we can discern some grains of perhaps unintended candour. He admits and seeks to excuse the long delay of Valens<sup>2</sup>, he slightly alludes to his

<sup>1</sup> Themistius, vii. (p. 92).

<sup>2</sup> Τοῦτο ἐκέλευσε τῆς μελλήσεως (p. 93). Compare Ammianus' character of Valens (xxxi. 14. 7), 'Cessator et piger.'

ignorance of philosophy<sup>1</sup>, and he hints as gently as possible that the Emperor is not sufficiently prompt in the issue of an amnesty. Indeed, when we see how large a part of the oration is taken up with the praises of the Imperial virtue of clemency, we begin to understand the reason of its being uttered, and can almost forgive the baseness of its adulation. As far as we can form a judgment from the very contradictory materials<sup>2</sup> before us, we should conclude that Valens showed at first great and unexpected moderation in the punishment of the Procopian faction<sup>3</sup>. Having dealt thus leniently with the great offenders, Valens should have issued promptly a wide and general amnesty for the humbled crowd of his rival's followers. But this amnesty came not, and as the Eastern Augustus grew more secure in his seat, fear, the most cruel of passions, asserted itself more savagely in his deeds. A trifling circumstance, the discovery of a purple robe in the possession of Marcellus, which Procopius had given to him as Julian was said to have given a similar robe to Procopius, set the weak brain of Valens on fire<sup>4</sup>. The base trade of the informer began again to flourish. The maxim, so unwise and so impossible to enforce after a time of successful revolt, that whosoever has

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

366.

Treatment  
of the  
adherents  
of Pro-  
copius.

<sup>1</sup> Καὶ γὰρ εἰ μὴ τὰ Πλάτωνος ἀποστοματίζεις μηδὲ τὰ Ἀριστοτέλους μεταχειρίζῃ, ἀλλὰ τάγε ἐκείνοις δοκοῦντα τοῖς ἔργοις βεβαιαίς (p. 93).

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus and Zosimus both loudly denounce the cruelty of Valens; Themistius and Libanius praise his clemency. As Tillemont points out (v. 84) it is the testimony of Libanius which is really weighty on the Emperor's side.

<sup>3</sup> The three highest officers in the service of Procopius, his two Praetorian Prefects and his Master of the Offices, escaped with comparatively slight punishments.

<sup>4</sup> Zosimus, iv. 8.

BOOK I. heard of treasonable designs and failed to denounce  
CH. 2. them is guilty of treason was rigorously acted upon.

366.

Torture was freely applied, and men free from all crime, who would rather have died ten times over on the battle-field, were stretched upon the rack or felt the cruel stroke of the executioner's leaded scourge. The relations of Valens and the vile herd of informers were enriched with the estates of men thus forced by torture to confess uncommitted crimes. From all ranks and conditions of men went up a sorrowful cry that a just victory had been foully abused, and that civil war itself had been more tolerable than the daily horrors thus perpetrated under the forms of law.

The Goths  
entangled  
in the Pro-  
copian in-  
surrection.

The insurrection of Procopius had the effect—and this is its especial interest for us—of bringing the Empire into collision with the imperfectly organised Gothic communities north of the Danube. As soon as the civil war was ended, and when Valens was hoping that his troubles from foreign and domestic foes were over, his Ministers brought before him the perplexing question what was to be done with the Gothic auxiliaries of the late usurper. They had arrived apparently too late to assist Procopius in the field, but they were not disposed to return empty-handed to their own country. A fragment of the contemporary historian Eunapius<sup>1</sup> furnishes us with an interesting picture of the outward appearance of these unwelcome visitors, as beheld by the officials of Byzantium. 'These men were insufferably haughty and contemptuous of all that they beheld, insolent even to lawlessness, and treating all conditions of men with the same lordly arrogance. The Emperor at once ordered

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 46-48, ed. Bonn.

that their return to Scythia should be intercepted and that the barbarians, caught as it were in a net, should be commanded to give up their arms. They did so, but even in doing it, showed by the very toss of their long locks their disdain for the Roman officials. They were then dispersed through the various cities and kept under guard, but without bonds. When the inhabitants of these cities were thus enabled to observe them more closely, they saw that their bodies though tall were not of a serviceable make, that their feet were slow and heavy, and that their waists were pinched in, as Aristotle says is the case with the bodies of insects. Thus making proof of their weakness they could not help laughing at the mistaken fear which they had formerly entertained of them.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

366.

Possibly we may find that the Thracian citizens were laughing too soon at the discovered weakness of these wasp-waisted barbarians. But in the mean time, in the summer of 366, their presence and their detention in the Empire led to the mutual despatch of embassies between Scythia and Romania. On the one hand Athanaric<sup>1</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Athanaric had probably become Judex only a short time before this Embassy was sent, or possibly he was raised to that position on account of the imminence of war with the Empire. Isidore in his 'Chronicon' under the year 369 says, 'Anno quinto imperii Valentis, primus Gothorum gentis administrationem suscepit Athanaricus, regnans annos tredecim' [369-381]. But it is certain from the narrative of Ammianus that the accession of Athanaric to power cannot be brought down so low as 369: and Isidore is notoriously loose and inaccurate in his chronology. Still his statement may perhaps be accepted as evidence of a tradition that Athanaric's reign was a short one, and that his accession did not take place long before 366. In the Acts of St. Sabas, the persecuting ruler of the Goths is called 'Atharidus, the son of the king Rhotesteus.' This is probably, though not certainly, the same person as Athanaric.



BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

366.

the chief of the Visigothic Judges<sup>1</sup>, demanded to know by what right the warriors of his nation, sent at the request of Procopius, Emperor of Rome, were now detained in captivity, having been distributed by Valens among the cities on the southern shore of the Danube. On the other hand, Victor, the most eminent general of the Eastern Empire, was sent to enquire wherefore the Goths, a nation friendly to the Romans and bound to them by the obligations of an honourable alliance, had given assistance to an usurper who waged war against the legitimate sovereigns of the Empire<sup>2</sup>. The Gothic reply to Victor was the same as the ground-work of the Gothic complaint to Valens. They showed him the letters of Procopius, asserting that he had regularly succeeded to the Imperial dignity as the nearest representative of the family of Constantine, and they pleaded that if they had done wrong, they had, at the worst, only committed an error of judgment, for which no further punishment should be exacted from them.

Valens determines to avenge himself on the Goths.

Not thus, however, thought Valens and his counsellors. All the machinery of the law had been already set in motion against the domestic abettors of the Procopian revolution. Now the Roman legions should march in order to take vengeance upon its foreign supporters. In the spring of 367 an army was assembled

<sup>1</sup> We may, I think, thus combine the  $\delta \tau\omega\nu \Sigma\kappa\upsilon\theta\omega\nu \eta\gamma\omicron\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$  of Zosimus (iv. 10) and 'Athanarichum eâ tempestate judicem potentissimum' of Ammianus (xxvii. 5. 6).

<sup>2</sup> 'Cogniturus apertè, quam ob causam gens amica Romanis, foederibusque ingenuae pacis obstricta, armorum dederat adminicula bellum principibus legitimis inferenti' (Amm. Mar. xxvii. 5. 1). Every word is here of importance as illustrating the relation of the *foederati* to the Empire.



at Daphne<sup>1</sup> under the command of Victor, Master of the Cavalry, and Arintheus, Master of the Infantry. They crossed the Danube by a bridge of boats, such as may yet be seen depicted on Trajan's Column at Rome; and marched hither and thither without resistance over the Wallachian plains, the Goths having retired to the fastnesses of the Transylvanian Alps<sup>2</sup>. Some of the families of the barbarians, slowly moving in their waggons towards the mountains, were overtaken and carried into captivity by the skirmishers of Arintheus. This trifling affair was the only event that marked the campaign of 367.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

367.

In the next year the scene of the war seems to have been shifted eastwards to the country near the mouths of the Danube, which is now known as the Dobrudscha. Marcianople<sup>3</sup> was made the base of the Imperial operations, and here the active and honest Praetorian Prefect Auxonius contrived to collect a large magazine of provisions and to make arrangements for distributing them by capacious merchant-ships to the various bodies of troops stationed near to the mouths of the Danube. We have a valuable convergence of testimony<sup>4</sup> to the point that all these measures were taken in a prudent and efficacious manner, and that, owing to the absence of corruption in the Prefect, the great expenses of the war were defrayed without adding to the financial burdens of the state, nay that on the very

Second  
year of  
war.

368.

<sup>1</sup> 'Prope Daphnen nomine munimentum est castra metatus' (Amm. Mar. xxvii. 5. 2). I cannot find a trace of this Daphne, as the Syrian Daphne is of course out of the question.

<sup>2</sup> Montes Serrorum.

<sup>3</sup> Now Shumla.

<sup>4</sup> Zosimus, iv. 10; Themistius, Orr. viii. and x.

BOOK I. eve of the war the provincials found to their joy a considerable diminution made in the taxes<sup>1</sup>.  
CH. 2.

368.  
Difficulties  
arising  
from the  
marshy  
nature of  
the ground.

Notwithstanding all these preparations however, the campaign of 368 was not marked by any signal success against the barbarians. The reason of the failure of the Roman troops was to be found in the peculiar character of the theatre of war, intersected as it is by all the countless channels through which the Danube pours itself into the sea. Almost all of these channels were too shallow to be navigated by the war-ships of the Romans, though the little piratical barks of the Goths impelled by only one tier of oars could traverse them with ease. The intervening land was covered with a fine and fertilising mud, through which the legions could not march. The innumerable islands afforded invaluable lurking places to the barbarians, while the Romans were continually losing their communication with one another in the flat, dyke-intersected country<sup>2</sup>.

Valens  
rebuilds a  
fortress.

In order to remedy these evils and provide a safe base of operations and a secure watch-tower from which to observe the movements of the barbarians, Valens determined to re-erect a fortress<sup>3</sup> in the very heart of the Dobrudscha which had been raised by one of the earlier Emperors (perhaps Trajan or Hadrian), but which had long since fallen into utter ruin, its very

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont (v. 87) says, 'En cette année il diminua les impôts mesme d'un quart,' but I hardly see how to extract this statement from the vague generalities of Themistius (Or. viii. p. 113).

<sup>2</sup> The slight hint of Ammianus (xxvii. 5. 5) Valens 'fusius Danubii gurgitibus vagatis inpeditus' is very well explained by the graphic account of Themistius (Or. x. pp. 136-7).

<sup>3</sup> Themistius, Or. x. p. 137. Is this the 'castra stativa prope Carporum vicum' mentioned by Ammianus (xxvii. 5. 5)?

lines of fortification being barely discernible. It stood on a narrow promontory of hill overlooking the surrounding marshes. Stones, bricks, lime, were none of them to be found on the spot, but all had to be brought a distance of many miles on the backs of numberless beasts of burden. The work however was well planned, the division of labour carefully arranged, and the common soldier saw with pleasure even the messmates of the Emperor bringing in their quotas of pounded tile as a contribution to the much-needed cement of the building<sup>1</sup>. Thus, in a few months probably, or (as the Emperor's flatterers said) swiftly and harmoniously as the walls of Thebes to the music of Amphion, arose the fortress which was intended to curb the lawlessness of the Goths of the Dobrudscha.

In the campaign of 369 all these elaborate preparations were crowned with success. The Emperor crossed the Danube by a bridge of boats at Novidunum<sup>2</sup>, and marching north-eastward through the country of the disheartened and dispersed Visigoths, reached and fought with their powerful kinsmen the Ostrogoths<sup>3</sup>,

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

368.

Third year  
of war.  
369.

<sup>1</sup> Ἄρα πιστεύσητε ἄν μοι ὅτι μηδὲ τῶν κατευραστῶν ἀπέσχετο, μηδὲ προκοίτων· ἀλλὰ καὶ κείνοι συνεσήνεγκαν μέτρον ὠρισμένον κεράμου συντετριμμένου (Them. Or. x. p. 138).

<sup>2</sup> Now Isaktcha in the Dobrudscha (between Galatz and Ismail).

<sup>3</sup> I will here quote the full text of Ammianus, as the passage is an important one. 'Simili pertinaciâ tertio quoque anno per Novidunum navibus ad transmittendum amnem connexis, perrupto barbarico, continuatis itineribus longius agentes Greuthungos bellicosam gentem adgressus est, postque leviora certamina Athanaricum eâ tempestate judicem potentissimum ausum resistere cum manu, quam sibi crediderit abundare, extremorum metu coegit in fugam' (xxvii. 5. 6). This passage does not (as I stated in my first edition) distinctly assert that Athanaric 'was the most powerful man of the tribe of the Gruthungi,' though this is the impression left by the first perusal. I

BOOK I. though we do not hear of his having faced in battle the  
CH. 2. mighty Hermanric himself.

369.  
Guerilla  
war with  
the Goths  
of the  
marshes.

Along with the movements of the regular army there seems to have been practised an irregular and somewhat discreditable warfare against those Goths who, lurking in their swamp-surrounded ambuscades, would not venture forth into open fight, but still continued their predatory excursions. Valens (according to Zosimus<sup>1</sup>), while ordering his soldiers to remain in quarters, collected the sutlers and camp-followers and those who had charge of the baggage, and promised them a certain sum for every head of a barbarian that they might bring in. Stimulated by the hope of such gains they all plunged into the forests and morasses, fell upon any barbarians whom they might meet, exhibited their heads, and received the promised reward.

The Goths  
sue for  
peace.

369.

The result of this guerilla war, of the march of the legions across the Wallachian and Moldavian plains, and above all, of the entire cessation of that commercial intercourse upon which the Goths, as a nation emerging from barbarism, had begun to depend even for some of the necessities of life<sup>2</sup>, was that towards the close of 369 the Goths sent ambassadors humbly beg-

formerly thought that 'Greuthungos' was here a clerical error for 'Thervingos,' but I now think that it is probably correctly used, and indicates other foes than those led by Athanaric. The 'continuatis itineribus,' the 'longius agentes,' and the epithet 'bellicosam gentem' indicating that a new enemy is introduced, all seem to point to the Ostrogoths; and after the elaborate preparations of Auxonius described by Zosimus (iv. 10) a campaign in the neighbourhood of Cherson and Odessa supported by ships in the Black Sea is quite conceivable.

<sup>1</sup> iv. 11.

<sup>2</sup> 'Quod commercii vetitis ultimâ necessariorum inopiâ barbari stringebantur' (Amm. Mar. xxvii. 5. 7).



ging for the Emperor's pardon and for the renewal of the treaty with Rome. At first Valens, perhaps with feigned severity, refused to listen to these overtures, which however he appears to have communicated to the Senate at Constantinople. A deputation from that body, including the orator Themistius, advised that the petition of the barbarians should be listened to, and the Emperor acted on the advice which he may have himself suggested<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
369.

Victor and Arintheus, the successful generals in war, were successively sent to arrange the terms of peace, terms glorious for the Empire and decidedly humiliating for the barbarians. The gifts of gold, silver and raiment, which had been till now the almost invariable accompaniments of a treaty with barbarians, were withheld. Withheld too were the grain-largesses which had hitherto been granted in abundance to the chief men of Gothia and their followers. One exception only was made in this respect. The chief interpreter still received his rations, his services being rendered no less to the Romans than the Goths<sup>2</sup>. The barbarians were forbidden to cross the great river, and two places only along the whole course of the Danube were

The peace granted.

<sup>1</sup> The words of Ammianus 'Imperator rudis quidem, verum spectator adhuc aequissimus rerum . . . in commune consultans pacem dare oportere decrevit' agree very closely with the account of Themistius (Or. x. p. 133) which implies, though it does not directly assert, a deputation from the Senate.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to be the meaning of a somewhat obscure passage of Themistius (Or. x. p. 135), Καὶ τὸ σύνηθες αὐτῶν σιτηρέσιον παρηρέιτο καὶ ἀντὶ τῶν τοσῶνδε τῶν πρότερον κομιζομένων, μόλις ἐνὶ συνεχῶρει, τῷ πρὸς τὴν γλῶτταν διακοινοῦντι ὥς οὐδὲν μᾶλλον τοῦ ἔργου Σκύθαις ἢ Ῥωμαίοις προσήκοιτος. Can this person who was 'attending to the language' have been Ulfilas?



BOOK I. assigned to them as market-towns in which they might  
 CH. 2. carry on the necessary operations of their trade with  
 369-370. the Empire.

The treaty  
 ratified by  
 Valens and  
 Athanaric  
 meeting  
 in mid-  
 stream.

When the substance of the peace was arranged, the form of its ratification had to be settled. But here a difficult question of ceremonial arose. Athanaric, the very type of stern, morose, adherence to old Gothic ways, had pledged himself to his father by a dreadful oath never to set foot on Roman soil; and, as it would have been beneath the dignity of the Emperor to cross over to him, a *via media* was invented and the high contracting parties met on a well-moored merchant-ship in the middle of the rapid Danube. It was probably a few months after the conclusion of this peace that the rhetorician, Themistius, uttered that elaborate oration<sup>1</sup> in its praise, to which we are indebted for our chief knowledge of these events. We cannot treat these panegyrical harangues as authentic materials for history, and yet with all their falseness they often give us valuable hints as to the thoughts which were passing in the minds of the statesmen to whom they were addressed.

Oration of  
 Themistius  
 on the  
 Peace.

'Too often,' says Themistius, 'have orators drawn their inspiration from bloody battle-fields, and magnified their hero by recounting the numbers whom he has slain. None of them has perceived that Peace, wisely and worthily concluded, is more glorious than many trophies. I for my part am of the same opinion as the divine Plato, that a lawgiver has an imperfect conception of his duty who provides only for the waging of war and not for the administration of peace. Herein lay the fault of Lycurgus, who made of Sparta

<sup>1</sup> Or. x, De Pace.

one vast camp, agitated by the perpetual sound of war. But (again to quote Plato) each one of us has in himself the germs both of Peace and War; but the impetuous warlike element ought to be subjected to the peaceful guidance of Reason. Even so the Roman Commonwealth has in it two principles—the tumultuous warlike element of the Scythians and the Germans, the calm and reasonable element of the Romans. You, O Emperor, have rightly judged that not even the barbarians ought to be utterly extirpated (since they too are in a sense a portion of your Empire and a complementary part of the human race), but that they should be brought into subjection to our laws and civilisation<sup>1</sup>. Thus do you exhibit yourself an Emperor of all mankind, not a philo-Persian like Cyrus, not a philo-Macedonian like Alexander, not a philo-Roman like Augustus, but a philanthropist pure and simple, absolutely worthy to be called a king because no member of the human race is deprived of your providential care.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

369-370.

‘It was in truth a magnificent thing that the Danube should twice be crossed by your armies with all the machinery of war; but nobler than those achievements, yea, nobler than the bridge which Xerxes threw across the Hellespont, was that one merchant-ship in the middle of the river on which you negotiated the peace with Athanaric. I saw not the gleam of the battle-field, but I did see there a Roman Emperor calmly commanding the subject bar-

<sup>1</sup> Οὕτως καὶ τῶν βασιλέων ἔργον οἷς τοῦτομα τοῦτο ἐπαληθεύεται, ὅταν παρακινήσαντας καταλάβωσι τοὺς βαρβάρους, τὸ μὴ πρὸρρίζον ἐκκόπτειν παντελῶς τὸ συμπλήρωμα τῆς φύσεως τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης, ἀλλ’ ἐπικόψαντας τὴν αὐθάδειαν, σώζειν ἤδη καὶ περιστέλλειν, ὥς τῆς ἀρχῆς μοῖραν γεγεννημένους (p. 131).

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

369-370.

barians. I heard not the Gothic war-cry, but I did hear their cries for peace, which would have pierced a heart of adamant. There on the further shore were they collected, a humbled and tractable multitude, casting themselves on the ground in the attitude of suppliants and raising their voices in unanimous entreaty ; so many thousands of Goths on whom for the first time the Romans could look without fear of their violence. Here upon the nearer shore stood the Roman army, drawn up in shining ranks, calm in the consciousness of irresistible strength.

‘Unlike the Eastern potentate who reclined in his tent, overshadowed by a golden roof, to watch the battle with the Greeks, our Emperor showed himself able to endure hardship even in the act of concluding peace. For, standing there on the ship’s deck, in the full blaze of the sun at that time of the year when the sun burns most fiercely<sup>1</sup>, he remained in the same attitude from dawn till late twilight. In the discussions of that day the Emperor, unaided by general, centurion, or soldier, was sole victor. His prudence, his subtlety, his flow of words, dignified yet gentle, and greater than I have ever observed even in an orator by profession, won for him an intellectual victory. Yet was his antagonist no contemptible foe. Athanaric is no barbarian in mind, though he is in speech, but is even more remarkable for his intelligence and prudence than for his skill in war. This is indicated by his refusing the title of king, and claiming that of judge, since the chief attribute of the former is power, of the

<sup>1</sup> Ἐφ’ ἡλίῳ στὰς ἐπὶ τῆς νεῶς, ἡνίκα μάλιστα ἑαυτοῦ φλογωδέστερος ἦν (p. 134). We may perhaps infer from this that the final *ratification* of the treaty did not take place till the summer of 370.

latter wisdom<sup>1</sup>. Yet this man, so renowned as a judge, failed ridiculously as an advocate for his nation. So great was his awe of the Emperor's presence that words altogether failed him, and he found the labour of speech harder than the toil of battle. Then looking upon him in his prostration and despair, the Emperor kindly proffered him his hand, raised him from the ground, made him by that act his friend, and sent him away with a storm of contending emotions in his soul, confident yet full of fear, despising his own subjects yet suspecting them of enjoying his humiliation, crest-fallen when he remembered his failure, yet elated by the thought that he had obtained the renewal of the treaty with Rome.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

369-370.

'By this war and this peace a complete change has been wrought in the relative position of the Empire and the barbarians. Heretofore, on account of the neglected state of our defences, the barbarians used to consider that peace and war depended on their pleasure. They saw our soldiers not only without arms, but even in many cases without decent clothing, and not less squalid and poverty-stricken in mind than in body. They saw that our prefects and centurions were hucksterers and slave-dealers rather than generals: their one business to buy and sell as much as possible, and claim a profit on each transaction: the number of garrison-soldiers dwindling, while these impostors drew the pay for soldiers who did not exist, and put it into their own pockets. They saw our fortresses themselves

<sup>1</sup> Οὕτω γοῦν τὴν μὲν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπωνυμίαν ἀπαξιοῖ, τὴν τοῦ δικαστοῦ δὲ ἀγαπᾷ· ὡς ἐκείνο μὲν δυνάμεως πρόσρημα, τὸ δὲ σοφίας (p. 134). An important passage, however absurd may be the explanation offered by Themistius.



BOOK I. falling into ruin, and equally destitute of arms and  
 CH. 2. men. Seeing all this, they naturally resorted with-  
 369-370. out fear to those predatory inroads which they glorified  
 with the name of war.

‘But now, along almost all the frontiers of the Empire, peace reigns, and all the preparation for war is perfect; for the Emperor knows that they most truly work for peace who thoroughly prepare for war. The Danube-shore teems with fortresses, the fortresses with soldiers, the soldiers with arms, the arms both beautiful and terrible. Luxury is banished from the legions, but there is an abundance of all necessary stores, so that there is now no need for the soldier to eke out his deficient rations by raids on the peaceful villagers. There was a time when the legions were terrible to the provincials, and afraid of the barbarians. Now all that is changed: they despise the barbarians and fear the complaint of one plundered husbandman more than an innumerable multitude of Goths.

‘To conclude, then, as I began. We celebrate this victory by numbering not our slaughtered foes but our living and tamed antagonists. If we regret to hear of the entire destruction even of any kind of animal, if we mourn that elephants should be disappearing from the province of Africa, lions from Thessaly, and hippopotami from the marshes of the Nile, how much rather, when a whole nation of men, barbarians it is true, but still men, lies prostrate at our feet, confessing that it is entirely at our mercy, ought we not instead of extirpating, to preserve it, and make it our own by showing it compassion?

‘The generals of old Rome used to be called Achaicus, Macedonicus, Africanus, to commemorate their victories



over devastated lands and ruined nations. With far more right shall our Emperor be called Gothicus, since he has permitted so many Goths to live, and compelled them to become the friends of Rome.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.  
369.

Notwithstanding the grossness of its flattery, some wise and statesmanlike thoughts were expressed in this oration, and the occasion of its delivery was one which might cause the heart of a loyal subject of the Empire to thrill with justifiable pride. The Goths under their 'most powerful Judge' had tried conclusions with the Romans under one of their least warlike Emperors, and had been ignominiously defeated. True, the victory was chiefly due to two great captains, Victor and Arintheus, formed in the school of Julian; but Valens had also shown respectable qualities as a strategist and a director of the efficiency of other men. Yet we, looking below the surface, and using the knowledge which subsequent events have given us, can see that there were two reasons why the war of 367-369 should not represent the final issue of the contest between 'Romania' and 'Gothia.'

The peace of 369 was a genuine triumph for Rome.

1. The Goths, relaxed in their energies by a long peace and by close commercial intercourse with Rome, had lost, to a great degree, their feeling of national unity, and had lost altogether their institution of kingship which gave expression to that unity, and made them terrible to their foes<sup>1</sup>. A loose tie of vassalage to the distant King of the Ostrogoths, Judges with ill-defined powers and ill-marked frontiers, full doubtless of mutual jealousies and suspicions, and ever on

Special causes of the weakness of the Goths.

<sup>1</sup> Köpke (*Die Anfänge des Königthums*, p. 112) considers that the want of one acknowledged head of the Visigothic nation was the chief cause of the successes of Valens.

BOOK I. the brink of civil war :—this was no sufficient organi-  
 CH. 2. sation wherewith to face the mighty Empire of Rome ;  
 369. this was a miserable substitute for the compacted  
 might of the irresistible Cniva. Yet should adversity  
 once more harden the nation into a single mass, and  
 should a king arise capable of directing their concen-  
 trated energies against the Empire, the result might  
 prove to be something very different from the peace  
 dictated by Valens to the crouching and moaning sup-  
 pliants on the Danubian shore.

Roman  
 corruption  
 stayed but  
 not rooted  
 out,

2. The hints let fall by Themistius as to the cor-  
 ruption of prefects and tribunes, the pay drawn  
 for non-existent soldiers, the fortresses unarmed and  
 crumbling into ruins, reveal the existence of a canker  
 eating deeply into the life of the Roman state. By  
 spasmodic efforts a Julian, or even a Valens, might do  
 something towards combating the disease and repairing  
 the ruin which it had caused. But could any Emperor,  
 however wise, strong, and patriotic, permanently avert  
 the consequences of widespread corruption, and the  
 general absence of what we call 'public spirit' in the  
 official classes of a bureaucratically governed Empire ?  
 That question has presented itself for answer on many  
 subsequent occasions in the history of the world. It  
 was an all-important question for the Roman Empire  
 towards the close of the fourth century of our era.

Gothic dis-  
 organisa-  
 tion in-  
 creased by  
 defeat.

The effect on the Gothic people of the unsuccessful  
 war with the Empire was to deepen their divisions,  
 and to intensify the bitterness of the religious discord  
 which had already begun to reveal itself in their  
 midst. We can imagine Athanaric on his return from  
 that humiliating interview with Valens, growling over  
 the growing degeneracy of his people, and swearing by

all the dwellers in Walhalla that the worshippers of the crucified God of the Romans should be rooted out of his dominions<sup>1</sup>. Scarcely had the peace with Rome been concluded<sup>2</sup> when Athanasius began to persecute—as his predecessors twenty-two years before had persecuted—the Christians of Gothia, and continued that persecution certainly for two years, probably for six, until he himself became an exile and a fugitive.

Many have been the discussions and the controversies as to the exact theological position held by the Gothic martyrs in this persecution. The Catholic Church has naturally been anxious to claim them as her own sons; but the orthodox Church-historian Socrates candidly confesses that ‘many of the Arianising barbarians at this time became martyrs<sup>3</sup>.’ Probably the Christians upon whom fell the wrath of the moody Athanasius belonged both to orthodox and to heretical communions, and were chiefly recruited from three theological parties.

Athanasius's persecution of the Christians.

<sup>1</sup> Dahn (*Urgeschichte*, i. 426) draws a vivid picture of the injury done to the State, in the view of an old Gothic warrior, by the Christian propagandists. They would withhold the sacrifices which ought to be offered at the great festivals—festivals that were also the parliaments of the nation: they would burn down the sacred groves and call the images worshipped there ‘lying gods’ (*galiuga-guda*): and for all these insults the gods, as he would think, would be sure to take vengeance by famine, by pestilence, and by causing the armies of the Goths to flee before their enemies.

<sup>2</sup> The most important passage as to the date of this persecution is in Jerome's *Chronicon*, under the sixth year of Valentinian (369–370): ‘Athanasius rex Gothorum, in Christianos persecutione commotus plurimos interfecit et de propriis sedibus in Romanum solum expellit.’ Sozomen brings confusion into the whole history by representing the persecution of the Christians and the civil war between Athanasius and Fritigern as later than the great Gothic migration of 376.

<sup>3</sup> H. E. iv. 33.

BOOK I. (1) In the first place, we are distinctly told<sup>1</sup> that  
 CH. 2. Ulfilas laboured at this time among the Gothic subjects

Arians.

of Athanaric as well as among those of a rival chief named Fritigern, on the barbarian side of the Danube. The great personal influence of the Apostle of the Goths, the perusal of his translation of the Scriptures, the persuasions of his loyal and devoted *Gothi Minores*, would certainly cause many of the barbarians to adopt his—the Arian—form of Christianity.

Catholics.

(2) There seems reason to think that the Church which had been formed in the Crimea, and which consisted of Goths professing the Nicene faith, exercised some influence on their countrymen north of the Danube, and contributed some soldiers to the 'noble army of martyrs' under Athanaric.

Audians.

(3) But besides these two elements, the Arian and the Orthodox, in the growing Christianity of 'Gothia,' a third was contributed by one of those strange heretical sects which every now and then spring up, live their short life of contest and contradiction, and then wither away. This was the sect of the Audians, who first appear in Syria about the middle of the fourth century, and whom we might call the Covenanter-Mormons of their time. Like the Mormons, they held the marvellous opinion that the Almighty has possessed from all eternity a body, in shape like the body of a man, and fills only a certain definite portion of space. Like the Manicheans, they averred that He created neither darkness nor fire. Like the Quartodecimans, they celebrated Easter on the day on which the Jews kept the Passover. Like the Scotch Covenanters and the African Donatists, they utterly

<sup>1</sup> Socrates, *ubi supra*.



refused all religious association with those outside their own sect, alleging as the reason for their exclusiveness the corruption of faith and morals which had crept into the Catholic Church. Audius their founder, a man of admitted zeal and piety, was banished in his old age by an emperor (possibly Constantius) to 'the regions of Scythia.' He remained some years among the barbarians, penetrated to the innermost recesses of Gothia, and instructed many Goths in the Christian faith. The monasteries which he founded in that land were, by the confession of their orthodox adversaries, places of pure and holy living, except for the depraved custom of keeping Easter on the 14th of Nisan. But at length, in a persecution, which, as we are told, was commenced 'by a Gentile king who hated the Romans because their emperors were Christians<sup>1</sup>, the great majority of the Audians, along with their fellow believers of other denominations, were driven forth from Gothia, so that there remained on the Gothic soil no root of wisdom nor plant of faith.' Evidently the fantastic heresy of the Audians played an important part in the early development of Christianity among the Goths<sup>2</sup>.

As to the manner of Athanaric's persecution it was as fierce, stern, and brutal as we might have expected from that sullen votary of Wodan. Some

Brutality  
of Athana-  
ric's per-  
secution.

<sup>1</sup> No doubt this is an inversion of the true facts of the case. Athanaric really hated the Christians because the Roman Emperors were Christian, and sought to root them out as traitors to the Gothic nation rather than to his gods.

<sup>2</sup> This description of the Audians is chiefly taken from Epiphanius (*Haeretici*, 70: I take the quotation from Baronius); but Theodoret (*Hist. Eccles.* iv. 10) supplies some details. The whole subject is very well treated by Scott (*Ulfilas*, 70-89).



BOOK I. Christians were dragged before the rude tribunals of  
 CH. 2. — the country, and, after making a noble confession of their faith, were put to death: while others were slain without even this pretence of a judicial investigation. The Pagan inquisitors are reported to have carried round to the tents of the Christians a statue, doubtless of one of the old Teutonic gods, to which the suspected converts were commanded to offer sacrifice, and on their refusal to do this they were burned alive in their tents. Men, women, and children fleeing from these inquisitors sought refuge in a church, which, however, proved to be no asylum from the fury of the oppressor, for the Pagans set fire to it, and all who were therein, from the old man to the babe at the breast, perished in the flames<sup>1</sup>. This deed of horror made a deep impression on the suffering Church. In an old Gothic Calendar, of which one or two fragments have been preserved, we find this entry:—

‘October(?) 29th. Remembrance of the Martyrs among the Gothic people who were burnt with priest (‘papa’) Vereka and Batvin in a Catholic church<sup>2</sup>.’

Martyr-  
dom of  
St. Sabas.

A letter, apparently a genuine contemporary letter<sup>3</sup>, from the Church which was in Gothia to the Church of Cappadocia, gives some interesting details concerning the martyrdom of St. Sabas, which took place on the 12th of April, 372. This Gothic saint, born in the year 334, had been, we are told, a Christian from his

<sup>1</sup> Sozomen, vi. 37.

<sup>2</sup> ‘—— k th (= 29). Gaminthi martyre thize bi Vêrêkan papan jah Batvin bilaif, aikklêsjôns fullaizôs ana Gutthiudai gabrannidai (zê? or zôs).’ The name of the month has perished. It seems to immediately precede November, but it has only thirty days. The translation of bilaif and fullaizos is doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> Acta Sanctorum, April 12.

childhood. A sweet singer in the choir and an eloquent opponent of idolatry in the market-place, he led an austere and ascetic life and laboured to convert all men to righteousness. When the persecution first broke out, the battle-ground between idolaters and Christians was, as it had been in the days of St. Paul, the question as to the eating of meats offered in sacrifice to idols. Some of the Goths who remained Pagans sought to save the lives of their Christian relatives by bringing them meat which had ostensibly been so offered, but which was really free from idolatrous pollution. This meat was eaten in the presence of the king's officers, and the apparent compliance saved the lives of the pusillanimous converts. St. Sabas, however, boldly protested against this dishonest artifice, and was accordingly hunted out of the village by the Pagans who had invented it.

After a little lull the persecution broke forth again: and again the friendly Pagans interposed with their proffered oath, 'There is no Christian in our village.' St. Sabas burst in with a loud voice, 'Let no one swear on my behalf. I am a Christian.' Then the Pagan mediators were forced to modify their oath: 'No Christian in our village save one, this Sabas.' He was brought before the prince, who asked the bystanders what property he possessed, and being told 'Nothing save the robe which he wears,' drove Sabas scornfully from his presence. 'Such a man,' said he, 'can do neither good nor harm.' A third time the persecution was set on foot, and now Sabas was keeping his Easter Feast with a presbyter named Sansala, just returned to Gothland, to whom he had been directed by a heavenly vision. While he was thus engaged

BOOK I. 'Atharidus son of King Rhotesteus'<sup>1</sup> broke in upon  
 CH. 2. the village with a band of wicked robbers, dragged  
 372. Sansala and Sabas from their beds, bound them, and  
 carried them off to punishment. Sansala was allowed  
 to ride in a chariot, but Sabas, all naked as he was,  
 was dragged over the lately burned heather, his  
 captors urging him onward with cruel blows. When  
 day dawned the saint said to his persecutors, 'Have  
 ye not been dragging me all night through thorns and  
 briars, yet where are the wounds upon my feet? Have  
 ye not been striking me with whips and cudgels, yet  
 where are the wales upon my back?' No trace could  
 be found of either.

When the next night came he was laid prostrate on  
 the ground with his outstretched hands tied to one  
 shaft of the waggon, and his feet similarly fastened to  
 the other. Near morning a woman, touched with pity,  
 came and unbound him, but he refused to escape and  
 assisted her in preparing breakfast for his captors.  
 In the morning Atharid ordered him to be hung by his  
 bound hands from a rafter in the room of a cottage.  
 The servants brought some meat offered to idols, saying,  
 'See what the great Atharid has sent you that ye may  
 eat and not die.' Sansala refused to eat and said that  
 he would rather suffer death upon the cross. Sabas  
 said, 'Who has sent these meats?' When the servant  
 answered, 'The lord Atharid,' he replied, 'There is  
 only one lord, the lord of heaven and earth. These  
 meats are tainted and unholy, like Atharid who has  
 sent them.' At this, one of the servants, enraged at  
 the insult offered to his master, struck him on the

<sup>1</sup> Who may be, as Dahn and many other scholars suppose, the same  
 as Athanaric; but to me this seems extremely doubtful.

breast with the point of a dart. The by-standers thought he must be killed, but he said, 'You think you have dealt me a grievous blow, but I felt it no more than a snow-flake.' Nor was there in fact any mark found on his body.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

372.

When Atharid heard of these things he ordered that Sabas should be put to death by drowning. As he was being hurried off alone to his execution he said, 'What evil has Sansala done that he is not also to be put to death?' 'That is not your business,' said the officers of Atharid. 'It is not for you to give us orders.' Then the saint gave himself up to prayer and to praising God, until they reached the banks of the river Musaeus<sup>1</sup>. And now some relentings began to stir in the hearts of his persecutors. 'Why should we not let this man go,' said they, one to another. 'He is innocent, and Atharid will never know.' 'Why are you loitering?' said the saint, 'instead of doing that which is commanded you? I see that which you cannot see, those waiting on the other side who shall receive me to glory.' Still praising God he was thrown into the river, with his neck tightly bound to a beam, so that he seems to have been strangled rather than drowned. His body, untouched by beast or bird, was brought to Julius Soranus, the Roman 'Duke of Scythia,' and by him sent as a precious gift to his native country of Cappadocia. It is from the letter accompanying the relics that these details—almost our only indication of the manner of life led by the Goths in Dacia—have been taken.

A somewhat later and less interesting document<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the Wallachian river Buzeo.

<sup>2</sup> *Acta Sanctorum*, Sept. 15.



BOOK I. contains the history of the martyrdom of Nicetas,  
CH. 2.

a young Gothic nobleman, who 'on account of his shapely body and his generous soul had obtained one of the foremost places in the nation.' He is represented as having been a disciple of Theophilus, the Bishop of the Crimean Goths who subscribed the Acts of the Council of Nicaea<sup>1</sup>; and he was therefore doubtless one of the Catholic, not one of the Arian converts to the new faith. 'At length,' says the record, 'the blood-thirsty Athanaric broke out into cruel persecution of the Christians and urged those who were about him to do the same. Threatened by these enemies of God, Nicetas heeded them not, but continued to preach the true religion. At length, breaking forth into open violence they attacked him in the act of preaching, forcibly haled him away and ordered him to abjure his faith. He persistently confessed Christ, and honoured him as God, mocking at and scorning all their outrages. Having hacked his body with knives—ah what madness!—they then flung him into the fire. Still through all these sufferings the saint ceased not to sing the praises of God and to confess his faith in him. Thus witnessing a good confession to the end, he, with many of his countrymen, received the crown of martyrdom, and gave up his spirit into the hands of God.' This execution took place according to the martyrologist 'when the pious and gentle Gratian was exercising hereditary rule over Rome.'

<sup>1</sup> It is plainly an error to speak of Nicetas as having himself subscribed those acts, since an interval of forty-four years intervened between the Council and Athanaric's persecution, and the whole drift of the story implies that Nicetas was at any rate not an old man at the latter date.



As we shall see in the next chapter, Gratian son of Valentinian was associated in the Empire in 369, and came into full possession of power on his father's death in 375. As far as this indication of time goes—we cannot attach to it any great authority—it would seem to show, what is not in itself improbable, that the persecution of the Christians, commenced by Athanaric in 369 or 370, was still raging in 375.

This outburst of zeal on behalf of the old idolatries by no means restored unity or peace to the Gothic Commonwealth. There was another Judge of the nation, named Fritigern, younger apparently than Athanaric, of noble, and what in a later age would have been called chivalrous, temper, probably imbued with some degree of Roman culture, and inclined to look favourably on the arts and the religion of the Empire. Whether the civil war which broke out between him and Athanaric was cause or effect of the persecutions we cannot now determine; probably the political and the religious motives acted and reacted upon one another. Fritigern, however, was defeated, and as his territory bordered on the Danube, he crossed that river and sought succour from his Roman friends. We are told<sup>1</sup> that the troops of Valens defeated those of Athanaric and compelled him to seek safety in ignominious flight. The silence of Ammianus, who is our best authority, inclines us to doubt whether any such signal victory was gained by the Romans over the Goths; but the subsequent course of events shows that by the year 376 Fritigern was again ruling over Visigoths on the northern shore of the Danube, and apparently at peace with Athanaric.

<sup>1</sup> In the Acts of Nicetas before quoted.

BOOK I.  
CH. 2.

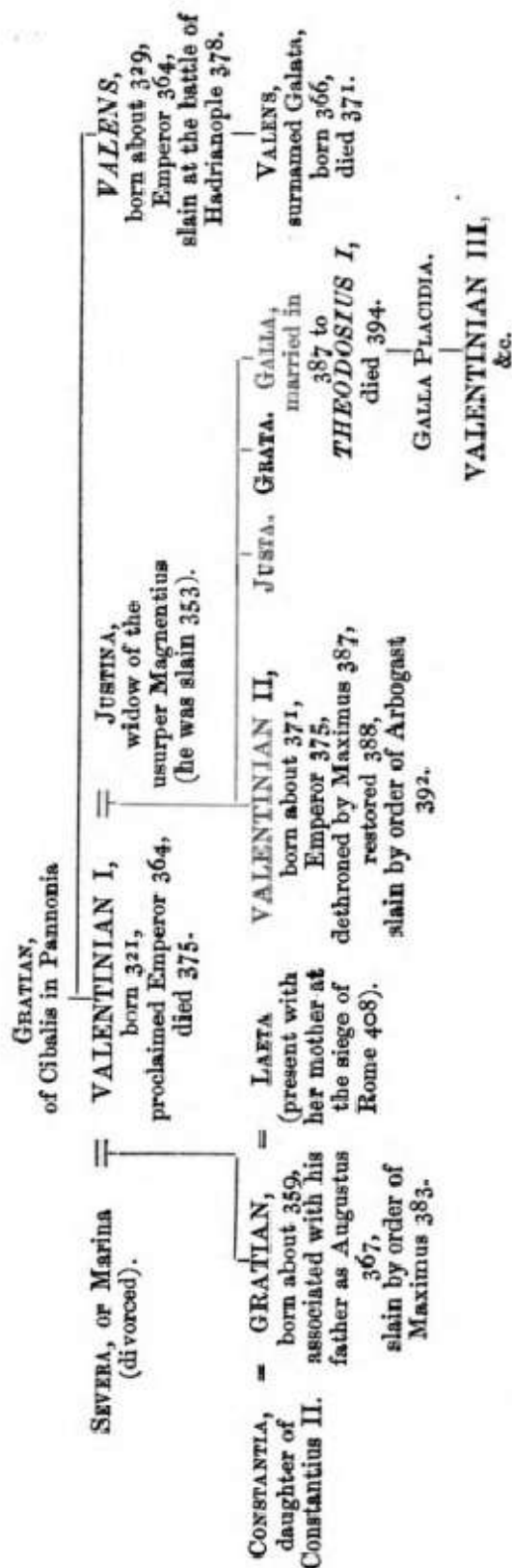
Depressed  
state of the  
Gothic  
fortunes.

But the condition of 'Gothia' at the opening of that year certainly seemed to forebode but little danger to the peace of South-Eastern Europe. The Goths had made that movement which the prophetic soul of Julian foresaw, and had failed. Even civil war in the Empire had not enabled them to gain any firm footing within its borders. After three years' fighting they had been fain to consent to an ignominious peace. Since that time, civil war among themselves, the contest of opposing faiths and civilisations, cruel persecutions inflicted and endured, had grievously weakened the Visigothic state. Even the far-away Ostrogoths had witnessed, and had apparently not avenged, the presence of the Roman eagles on their plains. To an accurate and impartial observer it must have been clear that at any rate from the Gothic race no danger need be feared by the mighty Empire of Rome. But the iron nature of that race had not yet been passed through the fire.



## FAMILY OF VALENTINIAN.

[Emperors of the East are printed in *Italic capitals*.]



*To face page 185 of Vol. I.*







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## CHAPTER III.

### VALENTINIAN THE FIRST.

#### **Authorities.**

##### *Sources:—*

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS (Book XXVI to XXX). Very full, but somewhat discursive. This part of his history is perhaps hardly up to the level of those books in which he treats of the fortunes of his favourite hero Julian. BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

ZOSIMUS (Book IV. 1-17). Meagre, but apparently fair, and in the main agreeing with Ammianus.

SYMMACHUS. Roman nobleman, official, and man of letters, who will be more fully described in a subsequent chapter. Two orations delivered by him in praise of Valentinian were published by Angelo Mai in 1815 from a palimpsest discovered in the Ambrosian Library. They are of course highly laudatory, but throw a little light on the dealings of Valentinian with the barbarians.

##### *Guide:—*

Dr. Heinrich Richter's *Das Weströmische Reich besonders unter den Kaisern Gratian, Valentinian II und Maximus* (Berlin, 1865) gives some valuable hints as to the condition of the Empire under the dynasty of Valentinian. The employment of barbarian officers in the camp and council of the Emperor, and the universal religious toleration of Valentinian, are two points which are well illustrated by Richter. Unfortunately the arrangement of the book is ingeniously bad, and there is no Index nor adequate Table of Contents to guide us through the labyrinth.

OF the twelve years' reign of Valentinian, Emperor of the West, I do not propose to give more than an

BOOK I. outline, since it has little direct connexion with our  
 CH. 3. main subject, the invasion of the Empire by the Goths.

Character  
 of Valen-  
 tinian.

The character of this Emperor is one which perplexed contemporary historians, and which at this distance of time it is perhaps impossible to paint correctly; so strangely were great virtues and odious vices blended in its composition. He was strong, he was chaste, he was diligent: not sparing himself in his labours for the Empire: desirous to rule his subjects justly: terrible to the enemies of Rome. But, on the other hand, he was cruel, with that delight in watching the infliction of suffering which reminds us of the Emperor Nero or a bullying schoolboy. He carefully husbanded the resources of the State, and did his best to lighten the burdens of the provincials: yet he often showed himself quite unscrupulous in the confiscations which he ordered or permitted. He seems to have honestly desired to be a terror to evil-doers, yet some of his prefects displayed a wild license of injustice such as must have recalled the worst days of Commodus or Caracalla; and the deep terror which Valentinian had struck into the hearts of his subjects caused them to lie down and die in silence. Yet, for all this, so great a merit was *strength* in the supreme ruler that, more than a century after his death, when the Romans wished to praise their just sovereign, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, they likened him to two men, *Trajan and Valentinian*, and said that he had brought back to Italy their days of happiness<sup>1</sup>.

Associa-  
 tion of his  
 son Gratian

In the year 367, when the Gothic war was just beginning in the East, Valentinian, who had recently

<sup>1</sup> 'Ut etiam a Romanis Trajanus vel Valentinianus, quorum tempora sectatus est appellaretur' (Anon. Valesii, 60).

recovered from a severe illness, determined to strengthen his dynasty by associating his son Gratian with him in the Empire. As the new Augustus was still but a boy<sup>1</sup>, this so-called association could evidently, for the present, bring the elder partner no relief from the cares of government. The account of the ceremony brings before us in an interesting way the process by which a theoretically elective was being converted into a hereditary monarchy. The scene was laid at Amiens. There by the banks of the Somme the legions were assembled, after they had been privately sounded as to the proposition which was about to be made to them. A high tribunal had been erected, upon which stood Valentinian and his son, surrounded by the heads of the military and civil administration of Gaul, in all the splendour of their official equipments. Taking the

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

367.  
in the  
Empire.

<sup>1</sup> According to the *Descriptio Consulum Idatio adscripta*, Gratian was born on the 18th April, 359, and was therefore only eight years old when he was 'elevated as Augustus on the tribunal at Amiens by his father on the 24th August, 367.' These dates are so precisely given by the *Descriptio* that one fears to question them, but I cannot resist a suspicion that Gratian was really older than he is here represented. Ammianus calls him 'adulto jam proximum.' Would he so speak of a child eight years old? Zosimus' words are *ὄντα νέον ἔτι καὶ οὐπω πρὸς ἡβήην ἐλθόντα τελείαν*. 'Ἡβή', according to the common acceptation of the word, began at fourteen. If Gratian were really thirteen instead of eight at the time of his association, his subsequent history would be somewhat easier to understand. According to the date of Idatius he was only sixteen at his father's death and twenty-four at the time of his own murder, having then been twice married. This doubt of mine is however a mere suggestion, as I do not feel that we have a right to unsettle on a conjecture like this the received chronology, resting as it does not only on the authority of the *Descriptio Idatio adscripta*, but also on that of the *Chronicon Paschale*. The entry in the last chronicle is very similarly worded to that in the *Descriptio*, but as the date does not precisely correspond (23rd May instead of 18th April) it cannot be directly copied from that source.



BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

boy by his hand and leading him forth into the midst of the tribunal, the Emperor spoke to the soldiers in that vein of manly and simple eloquence which had served him so well in the assembly at Nicaea. 'Gratian,' he said, 'has played as a child with your children. He has not led from the very cradle that hard life which was my lot in infancy, nor is he yet able to endure the dust of Mars. But he comes of a stock which has won for itself some renown in feats of arms: in your companionship he will learn to bear the summer's sun, the winter's frost and snow, the toilsome watches of the night; he will aid in the defence of the camp should foes attack it; he will expose his own life to save the lives of his comrades; and he will regard it as the first of duties to cherish the Republic as his sire's and his grandsire's home.' At these words and even before the Emperor's speech was finished, the soldiers, each eager to be beforehand with the other in complying with the wishes of their chief, shouted 'Gratiane Auguste! Gratiane Auguste!' They clashed their arms together, and the trumpets sounded a long, full, harmonious strain. Rejoicing in the success of his appeal, Valentinian invested his son with the diadem and the purple robe, kissed the Imperial boy, and thus addressed him: 'Thou hast now, my Gratian, by my decision and that of my comrades, received in an auspicious hour those Imperial robes which we have all hoped to see thee wear. Now therefore begin to fortify thy soul to receive a share of the burden which weighs upon thy father and thine uncle. Prepare to cross with dauntless soul the Danube and the Rhine, made pervious by frost, to stand firm in the battle with thine armed friends, to shed thy blood and yield



up thy breath for the defence of thy subjects, to think nothing an intrusion on thy cares which tends to the safety of the Roman Empire. So much I say to thee for the present: the rest as thou shalt be able to bear it. To your care, my gallant defenders, I commit the growing Emperor, and beseech you to keep him ever guarded by your faithful love.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

At these words Eupraxius, the Imperial Remembrancer<sup>1</sup> (a Moor from Caesarea on the north coast of Africa), led the cheers, crying with loyal enthusiasm, 'The family of Gratian deserves this at our hands.' Then the officers and soldiers broke up into little groups which began to celebrate the praises of the two Emperors, old and young, but especially of the princely boy, whose bright eyes, comely face and figure, and sweet disposition had already endeared him to their rough hearts, and seemed to promise a fairer future than truly awaited him in the chambers of destiny. No doubt the proclamation of the new Emperor was accompanied with a donative to the legions, at any rate to those stationed in Gaul, though we are not informed of its amount.

It was observed that Valentinian was departing from the maxims of state handed down from Diocletian in naming both his brother and now his little son, not Caesar, but Augustus. This was praised by servile orators as a mark of the generosity of the senior Emperor, who would make no distinction in outward seeming between his partners and himself.

Gratian  
not Caesar  
but full  
Augustus.

<sup>1</sup> Magister Memoriae. This officer, who was head of the 'Scrinium Memoriae,' was subordinate to the Magister Officiorum. His functions are thus defined in the Notitia (Oriens, xix.): 'Magister Memoriae adnotationes omnes dictat et emittit et precibus respondet.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Considering the absolute devotion with which Valens 'like an orderly' obeyed the commands of the author of his greatness, and the interval of years which separated both from the child Gratian, we may well believe that Valentinian's supremacy was quite unaffected by the titles which he chose to bestow upon the associated Emperors; and the excuse for greater pomp and a more expensive court, given by the assumption of the higher title, might, in the exhausted state of the treasury, have been wisely avoided.

Valen-  
tinian's  
special  
work, the  
defence of  
Gaul.

Valentinian's life as an Emperor was chiefly passed in the province of Gaul. Most of his laws are dated from Trier, some from Paris and Rheims, several from Milan, an exceedingly small number from Rome, which had practically at this time ceased to be an Imperial residence. The work to which he mainly devoted himself was the defence of the frontier of the Rhine and the Upper Danube, and this work he successfully performed. The barbarians, by whom the safety of Gaul had been chiefly threatened during the century preceding the accession of Valentinian, were the two great confederacies of the Franks and the Alamanni, the former of whom were settled along the right bank of the Rhine from Rotterdam to Maintz, while the latter, having broken down the feeble barrier, whose ruins are now called the Pfahlgraben<sup>1</sup>, settled themselves in the fertile Agri Decumates, where for something like two centuries the Roman civilisation had been dominant. Thus the Alamanni filled up all that

Con-  
federacy  
of the  
Franks,

and of the  
Alamanni.

<sup>1</sup> Extending in a course of more than 300 miles from the neighbourhood of Andernach on the Rhine to a point a little above Ratisbon on the Danube. (See the *Archaeologia Aeliana*, vol. ix, 73-161, for a description of the Pfahlgraben by the present writer.)

south-western corner of Germany and Switzerland, which is naturally bounded by the Rhine, as it flows westwards to Bâle and then makes a sudden turn at right angles, northwards to Strasburg, Worms and Maintz. The territory of these two great confederacies is constantly spoken of by contemporary writers as Francia and Alamannia. We feel that we are standing on the verge of modern history when we recognise in these two names the *France* and the *Allemagne* of a French newspaper of to-day. Though other elements have been abundantly blended with each confederacy, it is not altogether forbidden us to recognise in these two barbarous neighbours of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, the ancestors of the two mighty nations which in our own day met in thunder on the plains of Gravelotte.

Both of these Teutonic confederacies had for many years after the death of Constantine wasted the provinces of Eastern Gaul, but both had been effectually repulsed and driven back across the Rhine by the student-Emperor Julian. The Franks had taken the lesson to heart and remained till long after this time at peace with Rome. But the Alamanni, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, having rejected with scorn the meagre subsidies of Valentinian, crossed the Rhine soon after Procopius had donned the purple in Constantinople. They spread themselves through the north-eastern districts of Gaul, robbing and murdering, penetrated as far as Châlons-sur-Marne and defeated an army that was sent against them. Dagalaiphus, the faithful counsellor of Valentinian, who was ordered to march from Paris to the seat of war, did not display his old energy against the

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

The Alamanni the chief enemies with whom Valentinian had to deal.

366.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

366.

The Alamanni  
driven out  
of Gaul.

368.

Germany  
invaded by  
Valen-  
tinian.

barbarian invaders, but Jovinus, the Master of Horse, came up with them near the river Moselle, and hiding his own soldiers in an umbrageous valley watched the barbarians, who little suspected his approach. Some were bathing in the stream, some were anointing their hair with a pigment which was to give it a yet deeper dye than it had received from Nature, and some were quaffing from their deep horns of beer. The Romans rushed forth from their place of concealment, and before the foe could resume their arms, had wrought terrible havoc on the bewildered barbarians. In a series of engagements of this kind, some of them fiercely contested, the Alamanni were forced back out of Gaul in the year 366. Jovinus took their king prisoner, and on his own authority condemned him to the gallows. The result of this campaign seems to have been to effectually deter the Alamanni from appearing on the left bank of the Rhine, or at any rate from penetrating far into the interior of the Gaulish province. Rando, one of their kings, did indeed surprise the city of Maintz, while the inhabitants, thrown off their guard, were celebrating one of the great festivals of the Church, and carried off a great number of male and female captives and a vast quantity of booty. But this insult was avenged, when in the summer of that year Valentinian himself crossed the Rhine and, laying waste the territory of the barbarians with fire and sword, came up at length with their collected force at a place called Solicinium<sup>1</sup> in the valley of the Neckar.

<sup>1</sup> The position of Solicinium has been much disputed, but it is now proved to be Rottenburg on the Neckar. See *Colonia Summlocene* by v. Jaumann, pp. 128-136.



The barbarians had occupied a hill which rose abruptly on every side but one, that which faced the north, where it sloped down gently to the plain. Count Sebastian was ordered to occupy this side of the hill with a strong body of troops, in order to cut off the retreat of the Alamanni. Gratian, who was present on the field, but was still too young for actual battle, was put in a place of safety in the rear, close to the standards of the household troops called Joviani. Then Valentinian started off with a small chosen band of followers to explore the base of the mountain, thinking that he could discover some better way than that on which the scouts had already reported. His somewhat too arrogant confidence in his own powers of investigation was doomed to meet with humiliation. Instead of discovering a surer road, he was attacked by a band of barbarians in ambush, and in his flight found himself floundering in the thick oozy mud of a marsh. With difficulty, by spurring on his steed, he extricated himself from the slimy morass, and succeeded in rejoining the legions. His chamberlain, who was following him, bearing his Imperial helmet richly adorned with gold and gems, was less fortunate than his master. He and his precious charge were swallowed up in that dismal swamp, and there in all probability they yet remain, awaiting the spade of the fortunate discoverer who shall rescue from its long entombment the helmet which once gleamed on the head of an Emperor of Rome.

A short interval of rest was given to the troops, and then they were summoned to the task of charging up the height by the paths which the scouts had revealed. A desperate undertaking truly, and one



BOOK I. which reminds us of the terrible charge of the German  
CH. 3.

troops up the heights of Spicheren in 1870. The fact that it was made, and that at length after a bloody struggle it was successful, shows that the soldiers of the Empire—no doubt many of them of barbarian extraction—had not lost all that stubborn courage which once animated the legions. The heights once gained, the superiority of the Roman arms over the rude weapons of the Alamanni soon asserted itself. The spear and the pilum wrought deadly havoc in their ranks. They turned to fly, and their backs and the calves of their legs were exposed to the storm of Roman missiles<sup>1</sup>. Then Sebastian and his men came upon them from their northern ambushade and intercepted their flight. The greater number of the barbarians seem to have perished, but a few escaped to the shelter of their woods. The Roman loss also, as their own historian admits, was very considerable; but it was as undoubted conquerors that Valentinian with his boyish colleague returned to winter-quarters at Trier.

Frontier-  
policy of  
Valen-  
tinian.

In his wars with the barbarians, however, Valentinian did not show himself eager for their extermination. He knew, probably none better, how greatly the dwindling Empire was in need of men, and one of his favourite maxims was that it was better to rule the barbarians by military discipline than to drive them

<sup>1</sup> 'Postremo dum anhelī currunt et fessi, pandebant sequentibus poplites et suras et dorsa' (Ammianus, xxvii. 10. 15). Compare Horace—

'Mors et fugacem persequitur virum,  
Nec parcat imbellis juventae  
Poplitibus timidoque tergo.'

out of his dominions<sup>1</sup>. For the purpose, however, of exercising this military discipline it was necessary to have a strong frontier, and Valentinian's one absorbing care was to strengthen his border all round by the erection of forts. Every stronghold that he could build to guard the frontier of the Danube or the Rhine was another clasp fastened in the robe of the Empire to prevent it from being rudely torn away by barbarian hands. Yet this passion for castle-building, however praiseworthy in itself, was in the case of Valentinian sometimes carried to excess<sup>2</sup>, and then it involved the Empire in the very dangers which it was meant to avert.

One of the strongest of these fortresses of Valentinian was erected on a hill overlooking the river Neckar. That rapid stream, however, threatened by its strong current to undermine the foundations of the castle, and the Emperor therefore determined to divert its course into another channel. Huge timber frames, probably filled with stones, were thrown into the river, which, time after time swept away these presumptuous obstacles to its career. But the Emperor of Rome was determined not to be beaten by a German river; and his

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

His fortress  
on the  
Neckar.

369.

<sup>1</sup> 'Sollertiae vero circa rem publicam usquam digredientis nemo eum [Valentinianum] vel obtrectator pervicax incusabit, illud contemplans, quod majus pretium operae forsitan regendis verius milite barbaris quam pellendis' (Ammianus, xxix. 4. 1). I think we may fairly suppose that the maxim here expressed by Ammianus came originally from Valentinian. We find the same thought in Symmachus' second oration (cap. xx.), 'Dicam quod nulla monumenta testantur; tibi incola vivit Alamanniae: quos ferro subtrahis addis imperio. Sat est quod mores gentium parcendo mutasti.'

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus says (xxix. 6. 2), 'Valentinianus . . . studio muniendorum limitum glorioso quidem sed nimio, ab ipso principatus initio flagrans.'

BOOK I. resolution, seconded by the grand and patient obedi-  
 CH. 3. —————

370.

ence of the Roman soldiers (who had often to work standing up to their necks in water), at length prevailed. The channel of the stream was changed, and the castle was still standing strong and secure some years afterwards when the soldier-historian to whom we are indebted for these facts wrote his history<sup>1</sup>. When, in the following year, Valentinian, in his palace at Trier, assumed for the third time the striped robe<sup>2</sup> of a Roman consul, the courtly orator Symmachus introduced into the panegyric which he pronounced before him an allusion to his having thus bridled the Neckar: 'The Rhine,' said he, 'swollen by the Alpine snows, did not attack but softly flowed over the Roman territory, coming gently like a suppliant to adore her conqueror; and with her she brought the Neckar, offering this neighbour stream as a hostage for the "Roman peace," which the great river longed for<sup>3</sup>.'

The precise position of this stronghold on the Neckar erected by Valentinian is not described to us; but we may indulge the fancy, if it be nothing more, that it

<sup>1</sup> 'Castra praesidiaria, inquietudine urgentis amnis exempta, nunc valida sunt' (Ammianus, xxviii. 2. 4). This may have been written about 390.

<sup>2</sup> Trabea.

<sup>3</sup> '[Rhenus] aversatus est solum barbarum, totumque Principi agmen exposuit, more migrantium perfugarum. Non fuit ille, si credis, hostilis excursus: lento per aspera processu venit similis supplicanti. . . . Quod Nigrum fluvium quasi quoddam pignus accepimus, jam minus mirum est quod tibi regum liberi pro foederibus offeruntur. Nec Rhenus, ut ita dixerim, Romanâ pace gauderet nisi amnem convenam, velut obsidem, tradidisset' (Laudes in Valentinianum, ii. 9). It is somewhat audacious to make the Rhine's inundation of Gaul, however gentle, an act of homage from the river to the Roman Emperor.

may have stood on the hill of Heidelberg; and we may imagine the contrast between the stern square fortress of the Pannonian soldier, and that glorious monument of the Renaissance, dear to the memory of so many travellers, which witnessed the pageants of the ill-fated Frederick and Elizabeth of Bohemia, and whose ruins tell of the ravages of Louis XIV.

In Valentinian's dealings with the barbarian chiefs there was a singular mixture of kindness and perfidy. We have already seen that he thought it better to rule barbarians than to expel them. Symmachus praises him for not having ordered his soldiers to lay waste the humble hovels of the Alamanni with hostile fire, nor to drag the wild-looking mother from her bed before the dawn of day, but rather for having suffered them to flit away to the shelter of their forests, like timid deer across the lawns<sup>1</sup>. So, too, we find an Alamanni king, Fraomar by name, whose district (pagus) had been wasted in a campaign, sent as tribune to command a regiment of his countrymen in the island of Britain<sup>2</sup>. Bitherid and Hortar, nobles in the same clan, also received high military commands in the Roman army. All this looks like a certain degree of confidence and mutual understanding between the strong Pannonian Emperor, in whose own veins there probably ran a strain of barbarian blood, and his German

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Valen-  
tinian's  
acts of  
kindness  
towards  
the bar-  
barians.

Coupled  
with gross  
perfidy.

<sup>1</sup> Laudes in Valentinianum, ii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> 'Regem Fraomarium . . . quem paulo postea, quoniam recens excursus eundem penitus vastaverat pagum, in Brittannos translatum potestate tribuni Alamannorum praefererat numero, multitudine viribusque eâ tempestate florenti' (Amm. Mar. xxix. 4. 7). This is an important passage in favour of Dahn's theory that the German kings were originally 'Gau-könige,' as the devastation of one *pagus* (=Gau) throws King Fraomar out of a situation.



BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Case of  
Vithicab,  
the Ala-  
mannic  
king.

368.

antagonists. But then he also ordered or sanctioned the perpetration of some acts of disgraceful treachery towards them, such as must have been long remembered in the Teutonic folk-songs, and must have made it hard for the barbarians ever again to trust the word of a Roman Emperor. Vithicab, the son of Vadomar (that Alamannic king whom we met with<sup>1</sup> ruling Roman provinces, and upholding the standard of the legitimate Emperor against Procopius), had not followed his father's example, but preferred the rough independence of a Teutonic chieftain to the gilded servitude of a Roman official. His weak and sickly frame<sup>2</sup> was animated by a heroic spirit, and he was ever on the watch for an opportunity to stir up his countrymen against the Empire. Many times was his life vainly sought in fair and open fight; and at length some butler or seneschal in his barbaric household was bribed with Roman gold to assassinate his master. When the crime had been perpetrated the murderer took refuge on Roman soil, and 'for a time the inroads of the enemy ceased.' The historian's unimpassioned recital shows us, on the one hand, how great a part German kingship played in successfully maintaining the struggle of the barbarians against Rome; and on the other, how utterly the Roman conscience—notwithstanding its nominal acceptance of Christianity—had become depraved since the glorious days of Aemilius and Fabricius.

Case of the  
Saxon in-  
vaders.

Again, in the year 370, a multitude of Saxons, 'a race,' says Ammianus, 'which had often been gorged with Roman blood,' having safely steered through the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> 'Specie quidem molliculus et morbosus' (Amm. Mar. xxvii. 10. 3).



waters of the German Ocean<sup>1</sup>, fell upon one of the Gaulish provinces, probably in that part of the country which we now call Normandy and Picardy. Count Nannenus, the Roman governor, overmatched by the barbarians, and wounded in battle, applied to the Emperor for help, which was sent him under Severus, the Master of the Infantry. The approach of the Roman reinforcements, the glitter of the arriving ensigns and eagles, terrified the Saxons, who stretched out their hands and prayed for peace. Peace was granted them on condition that they should furnish a certain number of tall young recruits to the Imperial army, and should depart leaving their plunder behind them. The Saxons faithfully complied with these conditions, but the Romans with outrageous treachery fell upon them unawares as they were marching through a sequestered valley, and after meeting with a desperate resistance destroyed them to a man. The Roman historian does here condescend to remark that 'a just judge would have to condemn the disgraceful perfidy of the deed'; but adds that 'in weighing the whole transaction he would not take it amiss that so murderous a band of robbers was at length taken and destroyed when a suitable opportunity presented itself<sup>2</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

370.

Perhaps even worse than either of these crimes, as a violation of those rites of hospitality which even the most savage nations have held sacred, was the murder of Gabinius<sup>3</sup>, king of the Quadi. His people

Case of  
Gabinius.

374.

<sup>1</sup> 'Oceani difficultatibus permeatis' (Amm. Mar. xxviii. 5. 1).

<sup>2</sup> 'Ac licet justus quidam arbiter rerum factum incusabit perfidum et deforme, pensato tamen negotio non feret indigne manum latronum exitialem tandem copiâ datâ captam' (Amm. Mar. xxviii. 5. 7).

<sup>3</sup> I do not think we can offer any explanation of this purely Roman name borne by the king of a barbarous tribe.

BOOK I. were known to be already stirring in uneasy discontent,  
 CH. 3. because of the erection of one of Valentinian's favourite fortresses in their territory. The young Marcellian, son of the Prefect Maximin, an evil scion of an evil stock, had recently by his father's influence been appointed Duke of the Pannonian province of Valeria, and anxious to distinguish himself by some striking exploit, when Gabinius came, modestly urging the grievances of his people, he with false courtesy invited him to a banquet. After Gabinius had partaken of his hospitality, and when, not suspecting guile, he was leaving the Praetorium, the caitiff Duke of Valeria caused him to be murdered. Deeds of foul treachery like this perpetrated by the officials of a civilised state upon its ruder neighbours are even greater follies than crimes. The fame of them spreads far and wide, wherever barbarians meet to exchange thoughts concerning the men of cities and of strange arts, beyond the great river. That instinctive belief in the higher morality of the more cultivated race which is part of the spiritual capital of civilisation, is foolishly frittered away. In its place comes a settled persuasion that craft and cunning are the natural weapons of these effeminate foes; and a spirit of contemptuous hatred is engendered which, should Fortune open a way for its gratification, will wreak a terrible revenge.

Valen-  
 tinian's  
 policy of  
 religious  
 toleration.

Turning from the relations of the Empire with its barbarian neighbours to the internal policy of Valentinian, we find its most striking and noblest characteristic to have been his determination not to interfere as civil governor in the religious disputes of his subjects. After the fussy eagerness of Constantius to force his precise shade of heterodoxy on all his subjects,

after the almost equally ridiculous anxiety of Julian to efface the worship of the Crucified One by that of Jupiter and Apollo, it must have been a relief to all reasonable inhabitants of the Empire, Christian or Pagan, to have at the head of the State a ruler who at the very outset of his reign declared that 'he gave free opportunity to every man for practising that form of worship which he had imbibed with his soul <sup>1</sup>.' If there was some touch of hidden sarcasm in his reply to the orthodox bishops of Bithynia and the Hellespont, when they sought his permission to call an Ecclesiastical Council—'I am but a layman and have no right to interfere in such matters: let the bishops assemble where they please <sup>2</sup>'—the sarcasm was easily borne for the sake of the liberty which it gave. Yet Valentinian, who had already, as we have seen <sup>3</sup>, endured some loss of Court-favour in consequence of his Christianity, was not going to allow any of the anti-Christian edicts of Julian to remain on the statute-book. 'The opinions,' says he, 'which prevailed in the last days of the late Emperor Constantius <sup>4</sup> are still to prevail; nor are those things to have the sanction of a feigned authority

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Julian's  
anti-  
Christian  
legislation  
repealed.

<sup>1</sup> We do not apparently possess the original of this edict, but we may infer its contents from an allusion to it in Valentinian's law 'on Auguries' passed 29 May, 371, and referred to below. He therein appeals to the laws passed at the beginning of his reign, which we may, from this allusion to them, infer to have been faithfully adhered to during the seven years which had since elapsed. 'Testes sunt leges a me in Exordio imperii mei datae, quibus unicuique, quod animo imbibisset, colendi libera facultas tributa est' (Cod. Theod. ix. 16. 9; Dat. Kal. Jun. Treviris Gratiano A. ii. et Probo Cos. [=371]).

<sup>2</sup> Sozomen, vi. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Or possibly Constantine.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

which were either done or decreed when the minds of the Pagans were stirred up against our most holy law by certain depraving influences <sup>1</sup>. In other words, the whole of the legislation of the Imperial Apostate against the men whom he called in scorn 'Galileans,' was by this act abolished.

Sacrifices  
to the  
Hearth-  
god per-  
mitted.

But while thus abrogating all that had been done aggressively on behalf of the old religion of Rome, Valentinian could show himself tolerant towards superstitions which he did not share. He had proposed that the ancient rite of nocturnal sacrifice to the Genius of the domestic hearth should be forbidden by law and stigmatised as a loathsome superstition. But when Vettius Praetextatus, the Proconsul of Achaia, a Roman noble of virtuous life and cultivated intellect, who adhered to the old superstitions, besought him to modify the edict as far as Greece was concerned, saying that 'life would be unliveable to the Greeks, if they were not allowed to celebrate after their ancient fashion these rites which knitted mankind together in one common bond of reverence to the gods,' Valentinian repented of his purpose and allowed the law to pass silently into oblivion <sup>2</sup>.

Heathen  
augurs pro-  
tected.

Again, when the Emperor was legislating against those magical practices, which, as we shall shortly see, inspired him with something like the fury of a perse-

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Theod. xvi. 2. 18, passed in the Consulship of Valentinian and Valens, i.e. apparently the Second Consulship (368), though the First (365) would have seemed to suit the purpose of the law better.

<sup>2</sup> The curious history of this abortive legislation is given (of course from the heathen point of view) by Zosimus (iv. 3). His sketch of the character of Praetextatus agrees with what we know of him from the letters of Symmachus (i. 44-55). The edict is to be found in the Theodosian Code, ix. 16. 7, and was passed in 364.



cutor, he made an especial exemption in favour of the old heathen rite of augury, saying that 'neither this nor any other practice of the religion handed down from our forefathers is to be deemed a crime.' Those elaborate observations, therefore, of the flight of birds which, as we learn from the Eugubine Tables<sup>1</sup>, had been practised by the races of Italy, perhaps for centuries before Rome was founded, and which still prevailed when Horace declared that he would pray that neither the woodpecker flying from the left nor a wandering crow should hinder the departure of his beloved, might still be practised even under a Christian Emperor.

Two classes of persons seem to have been excepted from the general toleration, Manicheans and Mathematicians. In an age when Christian Theology was travelling further and further away from the facts of human consciousness, and entangling itself in a labyrinth of speculations as to the Essence and Substance of the Divine Being—speculations which could hardly be even expressed in any other language than that used by the subtle Greek—it is no wonder if many minds reverted to the older and more awful problems, old as the existence of a human soul capable of feeling the difficulties of the World in which we live. It is no wonder that such minds should have asked those questions which possess such a fascination for the brooding Eastern intellect, 'Is the All-good indeed Almighty?' 'Is

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Manicheans exempted from the general toleration.

<sup>1</sup> One of these tables, written in the all but lost language of the ancient Umbrians, begins with these words: 'Thus commence your prayer, having first observed the birds, when the sparrow-hawk and crow fly forwards, when the wood-pecker and magpie fly to meet you.' The coincidence with Horace's Ode, above referred to (iii. 27), is very striking.



BOOK I. "Love creation's final Law," or is there not another dark  
CH. 3.

Almighty warring for ever against the Lord of Love, and having had at least an equal, perchance a superior, share to His in the creation of the world?' Such were the questions asked by the followers of Manes, and answered by them in accordance with the principles of Dualism, questions doubtless far older than the Book of Job and yet new as modern Pessimism. We know from the Confessions of St. Augustine how great an attraction such speculations as these possessed for a keen and restless intellect, biassed by outward circumstances against a belief in the final triumph of righteousness. It was probably the conviction that Manicheism, whatever might be its pretensions to superior holiness, must in the end work against morality, which induced the sternly moral Valentinian to exempt its votaries from the general religious toleration, and to decree that wherever a meeting of this sect was discovered, the teachers were to be heavily fined, the disciples to be treated as outcasts from human society, and the places of assembly to be forfeited to the State<sup>1</sup>.

Punish-  
ments de-  
nounced  
against the  
Mathe-  
maticians.

Even more severe was the sentence passed against the hapless Mathematicians. In words which would now carry terror through the pleasant places by the Cam, the Imperial brothers decreed: 'Let the discourse of the Mathematicians cease. For if in public or in private, by night or by day any one shall be caught [instructing another] in this forbidden error, both [teacher and taught] shall be sentenced to capital punishment. For it is no less a crime to teach than to learn forbidden arts<sup>2</sup>.' By Mathematicians were

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Theod. xvi. 5. 3.

<sup>2</sup> 'Cesset Mathematicorum tractatus. Nam si qui publice aut

doubtless here meant Astrologers: and the law was thus aimed at that morbid curiosity as to future events, especially future political events, of which, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, the Emperors of this dynasty had an equally morbid horror. But whatever the conventional, legal, meaning of the term Mathematicians, it is difficult not to believe that so sweeping a denunciation of their craft must, especially in the hands of ignorant and over-zealous officials, have often molested the innocent sons of Science.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

The general toleration practised by Valentinian in the West was not imitated by Valens in the East. For this the elder brother, considering his powerful influence over the mind of the younger, must be held partly responsible. Valentinian was an adherent—though not apparently a very fervid adherent—to the creed of Nicaea, while Valens was a bigoted and acrid champion of that form of Arianism which was called the *Homoion*<sup>1</sup>. The opportunity was a splendid one for passing a common act of amnesty for religious dissensions throughout the whole Empire, both East and West, for providing that the Arians should not be troubled at Rome, nor the Athanasians at Alexandria. But unfortunately the opportunity was not taken, and while Valentinian was upon the whole consistently pursuing his policy of religious toleration in the West, Valens

Persecuting zeal  
of Valens  
on behalf  
of Arian-  
ism.

privatim in die noctuque deprehensus fuerit in cohibito errore versari, capitali sententiâ feriat uterque. Neque enim culpa dissimilis est, prohibita discere quam docere.' Prid. Id. Dec. (12 Dec.) Constantinopoli, Valentiniano et Valenti Augustis, Consulibus [365?]. Cod. Theod. ix. 16. 8. As the law is dated from Constantinople it perhaps emanated from Valens rather than from Valentinian.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Son is like unto the Father in such manner as the Scriptures declare.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

continued in the East those petty and harassing persecutions against the Homoousian Bishops and Congregations which had been begun by Constantius<sup>1</sup>. Still, notwithstanding this great and lamentable omission, Valentinian fairly deserves the fame of having made a greater and more successful attempt than any other Roman Emperor, so to use the power of the State as not to interfere with the inherent right of his subjects to worship God in that manner which each one in his own innermost conscience believed to be acceptable to Him. With his death the great experiment came to an end. It was again tried 120 years later, with equal singleness of purpose, by the Ostrogoth Theodoric, and for one generation it was signally successful. Then came Chaos and the thick Night of the Middle Ages. The very thought of a conscience free to decide for itself as to its relations to the unseen world, faded out of the minds of men; and it was not till

<sup>1</sup> Yet there does not seem to be any evidence of a general and systematic persecution of the Orthodox party by Valens. The worst case recorded is that of the Church at Edessa (Socrates, iv. 18; Sozomen, vi. 18). As for the alleged murder of eighty remonstrant ecclesiastics on board of a vessel in the Sea of Marmora, this seems to me to be an unproved and unprovable calumny. 'The sailors,' says Socrates (iv. 16), 'were commanded to set the vessel on fire when out in the mid-sea, so that their victims might even be deprived of burial. So it was done: when they reached the middle of the Astacian Gulf, the crew set fire to the ship and escaped from her in a small bark which followed them. The burning ship was driven by a strong easterly wind to the harbour of Decidizus, when she was utterly consumed with all on board of her.' No one who has carefully followed a trial for alleged fraud on the underwriters of a ship will accept this off-hand settlement of the question of felonious intent on the part of the Imperial consignor. Accident, the strong wind that was blowing, and cowardice on the part of the crew, are quite enough to account for the catastrophe.

the 16th, nay not till the 17th century, that it was again to assert its imprescriptible rights against the stern ecclesiastical domination alike of Rome and of Geneva.

The character of Valentinian as an administrator, described to us by contemporary historians, is such a mingled web of good and evil that, as has been already said, it is almost impossible to describe it except by a string of contradictory epithets. Just, yet tyrannical, willing to spare the pockets of his subjects, yet allowing them to be drained dry by rapacious governors, with a strong feeling of the duties of a ruler, yet delighting in deeds of cruelty—such are some of the paradoxes of this man's nature, paradoxes which, one fears, must be partly accounted for by the fact that the good in him gradually yielded to the evil, and that the longer he wielded the uncontrolled power of a Roman Emperor the more the inhuman element in his character prevailed. From one point of view we may see in him the strong, brave, chaste Illyrian peasant's son, endowed with absolute authority over the luxurious, demoralised Roman nobility, determined to correct their vices, to bring back the vigour and the purity of older days, and firmly applying the cautery to the social and moral sores of the Empire. This view of his character explains, and in a measure justifies, even some of the harshest deeds which Ammianus chronicles as having been done under his orders by stern Pannonian ministers like-minded with himself. But there are some stories told concerning Valentinian which will not fit in with this explanation, and which, unless we resort to the facile hypothesis of a strain of madness in his intellect, will force us to the conclusion that after

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Internal  
adminis-  
tration of  
Valen-  
tinian.



BOOK 1. all, the occupant of the Imperial throne was a barbarian at heart, with a barbarian's ungovernable temper and a barbarian's sensual pleasure in the sight of human suffering. The strangest of all these stories must be told in the very words of Ammianus, for it is not quite easy to understand how much he means us to infer from them.

The story  
of the  
bears.

'The mind shudders at the remembrance of all [his cruel deeds] and at the same time fears lest we should seem to be purposely seeking for the vices of a sovereign who was in other respects most useful to the State. But there is one thing which it would not be right to pass over in silence, that he had two fierce bears, devourers of men, named "Golden Darling"<sup>1</sup> and "Innocence," which he treated with such extraordinary fondness that he kept their cages near his own bed-chamber, and gave them faithful guardians whose business it was, anxiously to provide lest by any chance the ghastly vigour of those wild beasts might be destroyed. "Innocence," at last, after many entombments of lacerated carcasses, which the Emperor had himself witnessed, was sent unharmed back to the woods as having well deserved her freedom<sup>2</sup>.'

These pompous and obscure sentences may mean only that the Emperor regaled his favourite beasts on the flesh of men (presumably slaves or criminals) who were already dead; but perhaps it accords better with the general tenor of the passage to suppose that he enacted in his own palace on a small scale the

<sup>1</sup> Mica Aurea.

<sup>2</sup> 'Innocentiam denique post multas quas ejus laniatu cadaverum viderat sepulturas, ut bene meritam in silvas abire dimisit innoxiam' (Amm. Mar. xxix. 3. 9).



bloody sports of the amphitheatre, and ordered his victims, perhaps his barbarian captives, to engage in deadly combat with Innocentia and Mica Aurea. On any interpretation of the passage, more than mere sternness, absolute inhumanity must be attributed to the sovereign of whom such tales could be told.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Other stories were related of Valentinian's ungovernable temper. A page, stationed to watch some game, let slip too soon a Spartan hound that had sprung up and bitten him. The enraged Emperor ordered him to be beaten to death with clubs, and he was buried on the same day. A foreman in the Imperial workshops brought for the Emperor's acceptance a beautifully polished steel breastplate, which he had made to order. It wanted a little of the stipulated weight, and the too clever craftsman, instead of receiving even a diminished payment, was ordered off to instant execution. An eminent advocate, named Africanus, desired to be removed from one province, the affairs of which he had administered, to another, and Theodosius, the Master of the Horse, favoured his suit. The petition happened to be presented to the Emperor when he was in one of his surliest moods. 'Go,' said he, 'Count Theodosius, and change *his* stature by a head, who wants to change his province.' To this grim joke of the moody sovereign was sacrificed the life of an eloquent man who was believed to be on the way to high office in the state. A ruler of this savage temper, even though desirous in the main to govern justly, was sure to be often ill served by the men to whom he delegated his power, and whose oppressions his subjects would be too terrified to reveal to him. Valentinian inclined to the employment of military officers in the great civil

Instances  
of Valentinian's  
ferocity.

BOOK I. governments of the Empire, and he also showed a  
 CH. 3. marked predilection for his own Pannonian countrymen as administrators. There was probably good reason for both preferences, as it is likely that the whole bureaucratic hierarchy under Constantius had become enervated and corrupt: but Valentinian seems to have been unfortunate in his choice of subordinates. Strong men they were, doubtless, those Pannonian vicegerents of his, but also atrociously severe: and the soft citizens of Rome and Carthage trembled before them, as the subjects of James II trembled at the roar of Jeffreys.

Cruelty of  
 Maximin  
 and Sim-  
 plicius.

One of these cruel ministers of Valentinian was *Maximin*, born at the little town of Sopianae, now Fünfkirchen in Hungary, who from a very humble station (his father was a clerk in the quarter-master's office) rose to the great positions, first of Vicarius, and afterwards of Praetorian Prefect, of the City of Rome. His assessor was Simplicius, who had formerly been a schoolmaster at Aemona (now Laybach on the Save): and the two upstarts, master and man, seemed to vie with one another which could lay the heaviest hand on the ancient and noble families of Rome. But even the historian who execrates their cruelty shows by his history of the poisonings, peculations, adulteries which furnished the pretext for their outburst of violence, the deep demoralisation of the Roman aristocracy.

Prevalence  
 of magical  
 arts.

The favourite topic of accusation against these Roman nobles and many of their humbler fellow-subjects, was the practice of unhallowed arts. Whether men's minds were in an unusually excited state on religious questions, owing to the recent duel between

Heathenism and Christianity<sup>1</sup>,—whether Neo-Platon-  
ism, with its tendency to dabble in spells and incanta-  
tions, had infected the minds of many of the upper  
classes,—whatever the reason may have been, it is clear  
that there was during this period an epidemic of witch-  
craft and poisoning on the one hand, and a yet fiercer  
epidemic of suspicion of these practices on the other.  
For instance, an advocate named Marinus was accused  
of having attempted ‘by wicked arts’—magic—to bring  
about his marriage with a lady named Hispanilla. The  
proof offered was of the slenderest kind, but Maximin  
condemned him to death. Hymetius, Proconsul of  
Africa, a man of specially honourable character, was  
charged with having induced a celebrated soothsayer  
named Amantius to perform some unholy sacrifice for  
him. The soothsayer was tortured, but denied the  
accusation. In some secret place, however, in his house  
was found a letter in the writing of Hymetius begging  
him to perform some strange rites, whereby the gods  
might be prevailed upon to soften the hearts of the  
Emperors towards him. The end of the letter, so it was  
said, stigmatised Valentinian as a bloody and rapacious  
tyrant. Upon the production of this letter, and the  
establishment of some other accusations against him,  
Amantius the soothsayer was condemned to death by  
Maximin. Hymetius the proconsul was near meeting  
the same fate, but escaped by a well-hazarded appeal  
to the Emperor. Lollianus, the son of a prefect,  
a youth who had the first down of manhood on his  
cheeks, was convicted of having copied out a book of

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

<sup>1</sup> May not the morbid condition of the public mind in England under the Stuarts with reference to witches be similarly referred to the then recent controversies of the Reformation?

BOOK I. incantations. He, too, appealed to the Emperor, but  
 CH. 3. in his case the appeal only ensured his condemna-  
 tion, and he died by the executioner's hand<sup>1</sup>. Thus  
 lawlessly did law rage in the West. In the East,  
 Festinus, an obscure adventurer from Trient (in the  
 Tyrol), a friend and admirer of Maximin, having at-  
 tained the high position of Proconsul of Asia, imitated  
 but too successfully the cruelty of his patron. He  
 had called in the services of a simple old woman to  
 cure his daughter of intermittent fever, by a soft  
 charm-like song which she was wont to sing. The  
 spell succeeded, and the monster put the poor old  
 creature to death, as a witch. A philosopher, named  
 Coeranius, writing to his wife, had added a postscript  
 in Greek, 'Take care and crown the gate with flowers.'  
 This expression was generally used when some great  
 event was about to happen. Coeranius evidently, in  
 the judgment of the proconsul, was expecting a change  
 in the government. He too must be put to death. In  
 one instance the horrible and the ludicrous seem to meet  
 together. A young man in the public baths was seen  
 to be pressing his fingers alternately on the marble of  
 the bath and his own chest, muttering each time one of  
 the seven vowels in the Greek alphabet. The poor  
 youth's real motive for this performance was that he  
 imagined it would cure a pain in his stomach. Never-  
 theless he was haled away to the judgment-seat of  
 Festinus, put to the torture, and slain by the sword of  
 the executioner<sup>2</sup>.

End of  
 Maximin.

Maximin, notwithstanding the bitter hatred with  
 which he was regarded by the people of Rome,  
 succeeded in maintaining his hold on office, and on the

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus, xxviii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Id., xxix. 2. 22-28.



Imperial favour so long as Valentinian lived. In 373<sup>1</sup> BOOK I.  
CH. 3. apparently, he was made Prefect of Gaul, and about the same time he succeeded in obtaining the appointment of Duke of Valeria for his son Marcellian, whose foul murder of Gabinius, king of the Quadi, has been already described<sup>2</sup>. Justice, however, was not finally defrauded either in his case or in that of his base tool Simplicius. Soon after the death of Valentinian both these tyrannical governors were put to death by the sword of the executioner<sup>3</sup>.

Another instance of misgovernment, vainly pro- Tyrannical  
career of  
Romanus. tested against by its victims, was exhibited in the career of *Romanus*, Count of Africa. He was not a personal adherent of Valentinian, having been appointed to his office under the reign of one of his predecessors, but he had a friend at Court in Remigius, Master of the Offices, through whose hands all the reports prepared by the provincial governors, and all complaints against their rule, had to pass before they reached the Emperor. Remigius was connected by marriage with Romanus, and the Count of Africa, relying on his protection, plundered his subjects without mercy. At length, however, barbarian competitors in this trade of pillage appeared on the scene. The Tripolis  
invaded by  
barbarians  
from the  
desert. Austoriani, a people of the desert, taking advantage of the governor's indolence, broke in upon the province of Tripolis, whose long thin strip of fertile territory, lacking in its eastern portion the defence of the mountain chain which parted Numidia and the Carthaginian province from the interior, was always unusually

<sup>1</sup> See Tillemont, *Hist. des Empereurs*, v. 69 i.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Amm. Mar.* xxviii. 1. 57.



BOOK I. difficult to guard<sup>1</sup>. Goaded into fury by the punish-  
 CH. 3. ———— ment inflicted on one of their tribe who had been  
 burned alive as a punishment for some lawless proceed-  
 ings, they poured into the Tripolitan province, laid  
 waste the country up to the walls of the strong city of  
 Leptis, encamped for three days in the fruitful and  
 highly cultivated suburban district, burned all the  
 property which they could not remove, slew those of  
 the peasants who had not had time to flee to the shelter  
 of the caves, and then returned to their distant oases  
 in the desert, carrying with them an immense mass of  
 plunder and an important captive, a Senator of  
 Leptis named Silva, whom they had the luck to find  
 with his family at his villa in the country.

Romanus  
 refuses to  
 help the  
 provincials  
 of Tripolis.

The citizens of Leptis naturally called on Count Romanus for help. He came with a sufficient body of troops: he calmly surveyed the ruin wrought by the barbarians: and he said, 'Prepare me so many thousand rations for my soldiers' (naming an enormous number) 'and a corps of 4000 camels, and then I will march against your enemies.' The citizens pleaded that in their distressed and devastated condition, such requisitions as these were hopelessly beyond their power to comply with. Count Romanus accordingly, having tarried for forty days in the Tripolitan territory, returned with nought accomplished for its deliverance.

The Tri-  
 politans  
 send a  
 deputation  
 to Valen-  
 tinian.

All this had occurred, apparently, during the short reign of Jovian, and was one of the many indications of the courage given to all the enemies of the Empire by the failure of the Parthian expedition. On receiving the news of the accession of Valentinian, the Tripolitan

<sup>1</sup> This is pointed out by Mommsen (*Römische Geschichte*, v. 630).

senate at its annual gathering <sup>1</sup>, after passing a vote for the golden wreaths of victory <sup>2</sup> which it was usual to present to a new Emperor on his accession, determined to send their offering by the hands of two envoys who should be charged to lay before Valentinian the lamentable state of the Tripolitan province. Romanus, informed of their decision, despatched a swift messenger to warn his confederate Remigius, who took care to lay before the Emperor a report utterly different from that of the envoys. This diversity furnished an easy pretext for delay : and meanwhile the Austoriani again and again invaded the hapless province, laid waste the districts round Leptis and Oea <sup>3</sup> with fire and sword, and shook the very walls of Leptis with their battering-rams, while a howl of terror went up from the women within, who had never seen an armed foe before. Again many of the wealthy decurions were caught in their pleasant country homes and slain. One unfortunate and gouty citizen-noble, deeming escape impossible, threw himself headlong into a well. He was drawn up by the barbarians with a rib broken, taken to the gates of the city, ransomed at a great price by his horror-stricken wife, and hoisted up by a rope over the battlements into the city, where he died two days afterwards. After eight days the besiegers found that they could not make any permanent impression on the defences of Leptis, and returned disappointed to their homes.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Tripolis  
again in-  
vaded.

<sup>1</sup> 'Adlapso legitimo die concilii, quod apud eos est annuum' (Amm. Mar. xxviii. 6. 7). This is an important passage as showing that these 'concilia' were not held in all the provinces at the same intervals of time.

<sup>2</sup> Aurum Coronarium.

<sup>3</sup> Lebida and Tripoli.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Commis-  
sion of  
Palladius.

Meanwhile there arrived in the province a notary of the Emperor<sup>1</sup> named Palladius, with the double commission of distributing to the soldiers the donative to which they were entitled on the proclamation of Valentinian and his brother, and bringing back to the Emperor a report of the true state of the province of Tripolis. As soon as Romanus heard of the intended arrival of the commissioner, he gave a secret intimation to the officers in command of each legion stationed in the province, that they would do wisely for their own advancement by returning to this powerful servant of the Emperor part of the donative which he had brought for each of them. They complied with the advice; Palladius accepted the gift, and, thus unexpectedly enriched, proceeded on his way to Leptis. There could be no doubt as to what he saw there; the evidences of the misery and devastation of the province were patent to all men, and it needed not the eloquence of Erechthius and Aristomenes, two of the leading citizens of Leptis, to convince him that the Count of Africa had scandalously neglected the duty which he owed to these loyal subjects of the Empire. On his return to Carthage, Palladius told Romanus plainly what sort of report as to his sloth and incompetence he was about to make to Valentinian. 'And I too,' said Romanus in a towering passion, 'shall have my report to make to the Emperor. I shall have to tell him that his incorruptible notary has embezzled the greater part of the donative which was entrusted to him, and appropriated it to his own use.' Palladius saw that he was at the governor's mercy, and on his return to Court

<sup>1</sup> The *Notarii Principis* were officials of high rank entitled to the same precedence as *Consulares* (Cod. Theod. vi. 10. 3).

reported that the complaints of the provincials of Tripolis were all utterly devoid of foundation, and that Romanus was unjustly calumniated by them.

Then the wrath of Valentinian blazed forth against the men whom he honestly believed to be false accusers of a faithful servant. A second deputation from Tripolis had meanwhile visited his Court. One of the two envoys died on the road; the other was sent back in disgrace to Tripolis and forced to confess that he had been the messenger of falsehood. The cowed and trembling citizens disavowed the commission which they had entrusted to him. He and four other eminent members of the local senate were condemned to death; and Erechthius and Aristomenes, the orators who had pleaded the cause of Tripolis before Palladius, were sentenced to have their tongues torn out, but escaped from the executioners who were charged with this cruel mandate.

So did the wrathful Emperor, with all his desire to deal justly, wreak cruel injustice on his unoffending subjects. Many years afterwards, when Palladius had received his dismissal, when the misgovernment of Romanus had reached its height, and when Count Theodosius had been sent to supersede him, he found among his papers the letter of a certain Meterius, which ended thus: 'Palladius the castaway salutes thee, who says that he is a castaway for no other reason than because he told lies to the sacred (Imperial) ears in the business of the Tripolitans.' This expression led to further enquiry; Meterius confessed the authorship of the letter. Palladius was arrested, but on the journey to Court escaped from his guards who were celebrating the vigil of some Christian festival, twisted a noose round his neck and hanged

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Anger of  
Valen-  
tinian  
against the  
Tripoli-  
tans.

Tardy  
justice on  
Romanus  
and  
Palladius.  
373.



BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

himself. The same fate overtook Remigius, who was now no longer Master of the Offices, but was living in retirement at Maintz. He too terminated his life with the cord to avoid a public execution. Romanus, the arch-criminal of all, seems to have escaped with life, though deprived of office, but his later fortunes are wrapped in obscurity. The two eloquent Tripolitans, Erechthius and Aristomenes, emerged from their long hiding-place and the cruel sentence against them remained unexecuted. A full report was drawn up to the Emperor clearing the characters of all the Tripolitans, and the injustice that had been committed was, as far as possible, atoned for. But much had been done that was irreversible.

Petronius  
Probus,  
Prefect of  
Illyricum.

We have seen how Italy groaned under the tyranny of Maximin, how Africa was pillaged by its governor Romanus. Now we turn to Illyricum. There again, in the history of the administration of Probus (which connects itself with the closing scenes of the Emperor's life), we shall observe, not only the weakness of the Roman official aristocracy, but also the extreme difficulty with which even a sovereign who wished to rule righteously—and this with all his faults was the desire of Valentinian—escaped being made a partaker in the oppression of his subjects.

*Petronius Probus*, allied by marriage to the great Anician gens, one of the very few families which combined wealth, official distinction, devotion to Christianity, and a really ancient descent from ancestors conspicuous in the great days of the Republic, was himself a man marked out, in the constitution of the state as it then existed, for the frequent enjoyment of high office. Of vast wealth, with estates in almost every



province of the Roman world, with his ancient lineage, his relationship to all the noblest families of Rome, and his reputation for orthodox faith, he had as strong a claim on Countships and Prefectures under the dynasty of Valentinian as the Spensers and Pelhams and other members of the great Revolution families had on Secretaryships and Lord Lieutenancies in the days of the early Georges. And these claims he was not slow to enforce. He had a vast tribe of dependents, his liberality to whom kept him needy, notwithstanding his enormous wealth, and whose misdeeds, though not himself a cruel or unjust ruler, he was all too ready to condone. Hence it came to pass that Petronius Probus, though neither soldier nor statesman, was almost perpetually in office, being translated from Africa to Italy, and from Italy to Illyricum; and, as Ammianus sarcastically remarks, in the short intervals when he held no prefecture he gasped and languished like one of the denizens of the deep expelled from its own element and laid upon the shore<sup>1</sup>. This was the man who held the responsible post of Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum in the year 374, and who had to stem the torrent of barbarian invasion caused by the righteous indignation of the Quadi at the treacherous murder of Gabinius their king<sup>2</sup>. The enraged barbarians crossed the Danube, appeared suddenly among the unsuspecting Pannonians, who were engaged in the labours of the harvest, slew great numbers of them and drove back vast multitudes of sheep and cattle to their homes. They were very near carrying off a more splendid prize, and one the loss of which would have more deeply

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Irruption  
of the  
Quadi.

<sup>1</sup> Amm. Mar. xxvii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 200.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

374

wounded the pride of Rome. The daughter of the late Emperor Constantius, the same whom as a child of four years old Procopius had so often exhibited to the applauding legions, was now on her way to Gaul where she was to be married to the young Emperor Gratian. She was resting at a post-house<sup>1</sup>, about twenty-six miles west of Sirmium, when the wandering bands of the Quadi were seen in the distance. Most fortunately Messalla, Duke of Pannonia Secunda, was near at hand, and hearing of her danger hurried to the post-house, placed the young bride on his official chariot, and lashing his horses to a gallop soon reached with his precious charge the friendly shelter of the walls of Sirmium.

Cowardice  
and in-  
capacity of  
Probus.

Barbarians, however, of various origin were now roaming over the desolate province. The Teutonic Quadi were mingled with the Slavonic Sarmatians, and all brought terror to the subjects of Rome. Men and women were being driven off together with their cattle into the squalid servitude of barbarian homesteads. Many a spacious villa, the centre from which the Roman lord had issued his commands to the hundreds of *coloni* who cultivated his lands, was now laid in ashes, and its tessellated pavements dyed with the blood of its late inhabitants, while the savage invaders mocked at the trail of misery which they left behind them<sup>2</sup>, and probably vaunted to one another that King Gabinius was now indeed avenged. All this time, in the Praetorium at Sirmium, which should have been the home of manly counsels and the centre of brave resistance, there was panic and bewilderment. To the middle-aged Probus this was a first experience of the terrors of war.

<sup>1</sup> In publicâ villâ quam appellant Pistrensem.

<sup>2</sup> Amm. Mar. xxix. 6. 8.

He sat sighing in his palace, scarcely raising his eyes from the ground; and at last he made up his mind that when night fell he would escape with fleet horses from the city. Some faithful counsellor, however, informed him that, if he took flight, all the defenders of the city would inevitably follow his example, and that the disgrace of abandoning Sirmium, the first city of Illyricum, to the barbarians, would irretrievably ruin his career. Upon this he plucked up a little courage from necessity, cleared out the fosses which surrounded the city from the ruins that encumbered them, and repaired the breaches which in the long years of peace had weakened the circuit of the walls. Concentrating his whole attention on this work of rebuilding, and devoting to it a large sum of money which had been collected, but had fortunately not been expended, for the construction of a theatre, he before long was able to confront the barbarians with a circuit of lofty fortifications, perfect from base to summit. When the Quadi who had lingered too long over the congenial work of plunder at length appeared before the walls, they found them too strong to be taken by their rude appliances, and retreated, hoping to meet with and punish the general<sup>1</sup> to whom they attributed the slaughter of their king. In their disorderly march two Roman legions came up with them and might easily have won a signal victory, but their first success was turned into defeat by the jealousies of the two bodies of troops and their want of concerted action. However, when things seemed at their worst for the cause of the Empire in the Illyrian provinces, a victory won over the 'Free Sarmatians'<sup>2</sup>

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

374.

<sup>1</sup> Aequitius.

<sup>2</sup> So called to distinguish them from the Servile Sarmatians (or

BOOK I. by the brave young Duke of Moesia, Theodosius,  
 CH. 3. restored the fortune of war, and together with the  
 374- rumoured approach of legions from Gaul, caused the  
 barbarians at last to sue for peace and to withdraw from  
 the scene of their ravages.

Valen-  
 tinian re-  
 ceives the  
 news of  
 the ravages  
 in Pan-  
 nonia.

In his terror at the barbarian invasion Probus sent messengers to Valentinian to beg for assistance. The messengers found him in the neighbourhood of Bâle, where it need hardly be said that he was engaged in the construction of a fortress<sup>1</sup>. The first impulse of the warlike Emperor was at once to march from the Rhine to the Danube in order to chastise the insolent barbarians who had dared to violate the Roman frontier. The advice of his trusty counsellors persuaded him to postpone the campaign of retaliation till next spring. They pointed out that the autumn was now far spent, that the plains, hardened by frost, would afford no pasture for the beasts of burden which accompanied the army, and that Macrianus, king of the Alamanni, an old enemy of the Empire, who had fought with Julian fifteen years before, was hovering, angry and menacing, on the frontiers of Gaul, and would certainly seize the opportunity of the Emperor's absence to make an inroad into the wealthy province, perhaps even to storm some of its cities.

Valen-  
 tinian  
 makes  
 peace with  
 Macrianus.

Having decided to postpone his eastward march till spring, Valentinian determined to employ the interval thus left him in establishing a league of friendship with Macrianus. The Alamannic king, who had an

Limigantes) who, according to tradition, were armed by their masters as auxiliaries against the Goths, and used their arms to expel their former lords.

<sup>1</sup> Named Robur. Its site has not yet been clearly identified.



unending quarrel with his Burgundian neighbours on the north, about the possession of the salt-springs on the Kocher<sup>1</sup>, was not sorry to accept the proffered friendship of Rome. He came to meet the Emperor near Maintz, accompanied by a multitude of his countrymen, who clashed their shields and swords together with barbarous dissonance, while Macrianus stood by the swiftly-flowing Rhine, holding his head high, and swelling with pride, real or assumed, as if he were the arbiter of peace or war<sup>2</sup>. On the side of the Romans appeared the great Augustus, moving slowly up the stream in the Imperial galley. Disembarking, he took up his station on the shore with the eagles and dragons of the legions glittering above his head, and the brilliantly accoutred officers of his camp, some of whom probably came from the plains of the Euphrates and others from beneath the shadow of the Pyrenees, all clustering around him. It was the meeting of Valens and Athanaric repeated, not on the Danube but on the other great frontier-stream of the Empire, and with a more lordly presence than that of Valens to represent the majesty of Rome. With a few well-chosen words and significant gestures Valentinian repressed the insolence of the barbarians, then discussed the mutual rights and wrongs alleged between them and the Empire, and finally exchanged the solemn oath of per-

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

374.

<sup>1</sup> See Amm. Mar. xviii. 2. 15 and xxviii. 5. 11. The salt-springs were probably those of Schwäbische Hall and Niedern Hall in Würtemberg. 'Hall' in German geography frequently marks the presence of salt-works.

<sup>2</sup> 'Et venit inmane quo quantoque flatu distentus ut futurus arbiter superior pacis, dieque praedicto conloquii ad ipsam marginem Rheni caput altius erigens stetit, hinc inde sonitu scutorum intonante gentilium' (Amm. Mar. xxx. 3. 4).



BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

374.

petual friendship with Macrianus. This treaty was not an empty form: the vanity of the Alaman had been flattered, his anger soothed, his self-interest enlisted on the side of peace with Rome. He faithfully observed the treaty to the end of his days, and finally perished, we are told, in 'Francia' (which at that time meant probably the country on the right bank of the Lower Rhine), having fallen into an ambush laid for him by the King of the Franks, the warlike Mallobaudes.

Valen-  
tinian  
marches  
to the  
Danube.

375.

After the treaty with Macrianus, Valentinian entered his winter-quarters at Trier, and with the early spring set out for Illyricum to put in order the things which had been disarranged by the feebleness of Probus. He marched quickly by the well-known military roads into his native province, and, when arrived there, was met by an embassy of Sarmatians who, falling at his feet, besought his favour and protested their innocence of any share in the barbarian inroads. 'That question,' said he, 'I shall settle after an accurate investigation on the scene of the outrages,' and dismissed them from his presence. Almost immediately after this interview he reached Carnuntum, once the great city of Pannonia and a colony, now represented only by the ruins of Petronell, on the Danube, about thirty miles below Vienna. Desolated by the barbarians, probably in their latest inroad, it had lost its importance as a station of the Danubian fleet and the head-quarters of the fourteenth legion, both of which had been transferred to Vindobona, now Vienna. Thus the world-wide fame of this latter city, the city of the Habsburgs, is derived by no doubtful ancestry from these movements of obscure barbarian tribes under the prefecture of Petronius Probus. Carnuntum, when Valentinian visited it,

was still what our Saxon forefathers would have called BOOK I.  
CH. 3.  
'a waste Chester,' lying in squalid loneliness by the sullen Danube; but the Emperor repaired it sufficiently to make it a place of arms, from whence he might sally forth to repel the incursions of the barbarians.

The arrival of Valentinian in the province of Pan- Enquiry  
into the  
misgovern-  
ment of  
Probus.  
nonia struck terror into the hearts of the officials of that misgoverned province, and gave hope to the oppressed. Now at length, thought they, 'this stern but upright ruler will enquire into the whole series of tyrannical and cowardly acts by which this noble province has been brought to the brink of ruin. Unhappily, however, the Emperor had already begun to show signs of that weakness which often marks the later years of a monarch's reign — undue leniency towards great criminals, coupled with undue severity towards the little ones. No enquiry was instituted into the iniquitous murder of Gabinius, the source of all these later troubles; and it seemed as if even the mal-administration of Probus would pass unchallenged. It was notorious that in his eager quest for money, to gratify the greed of his dependents and to prolong his own tenure of office, Probus had frequently driven rich citizens into crime, had multiplied taxes, and had increased their weight till in some cities the wealthier inhabitants had passed years in prison at the suit of the tax-gatherer, while others had committed suicide to escape his extortions. All this was well known to the whole Roman world except the Emperor; but to him came deputation after deputation from one province of Illyricum after another, offering hollow congratulations, and thanking the Imperial providence for blessing them with such a ruler as Petronius Probus. At length,

BOOK I. when the deputation from Epirus was announced, with  
 CH. 3. Iphicles, rhetorician and philosopher, at its head, some fortunate chance led the Emperor to enquire 'Do you come of your own accord, on this errand of panegyric : do your fellow-citizens in their hearts think so well of the prefect ?' 'No, indeed,' said the truthful philosopher, 'most reluctantly do I come from my groaning countrymen.' On this hint Valentinian acted. He enquired what had happened to the chief citizens of the Illyrian towns. He found that one wealthy burgess had fled across the sea ; that another, the chief of his order, had perished under the cruel strokes of the *plumbatae* (the leaded scourge with which criminals were tortured) ; that another, renowned and beloved above his fellows, had hanged himself. All these discoveries kindled Valentinian's wrath against the avaricious governor, slack against the barbarian, and terrible only to his own countrymen, by whom Pannonia had been brought into such calamity. Probus had to face the anger of the terrible Emperor, and would probably have been ordered to lay down his prefecture in disgrace but for the event which soon after left the Roman world without its highest ruler.

Valen-  
 tinian at  
 Bregetio.

Valentinian spent the three summer months at Carnuntum<sup>1</sup>. In the autumn he moved his forces to

<sup>1</sup> During this time a certain Faustinus, nephew of a Prefect, was put to death by order of Probus, being accused of having killed an ass. 'To be used in magical rites' said his accusers. 'No, but in order to cure my premature baldness' was his reply. Both the accusation and the defence seem equally unintelligible to us. Another article of indictment was that when a certain Nigrinus had asked him to procure for him a notary's place, he had said in joke, 'Make me Emperor if you want to get that accomplished.' Nigrinus was put to death for this conversation as well as Faustinus.

Acincum (close to the modern city of Buda), crossed the Danube on a bridge of boats, and laid waste the houses and lands of the Quadi with fire and sword. Winter came on early, and he took up his quarters at Bregetio on the Danube, close to the strong rock-fortress of Komorn, where the Hungarians in 1849 made their last gallant stand against the overwhelming and united armies of the Habsburg and the Czar. But now, in the dreary Pannonian winter days, the superstitious courtiers and officers of the camp began to whisper to one another all sorts of omens of impending calamity. Comets had trailed their portentous length along the sky; at Sirmium a flash of lightning had set the palace, the senate-house, and the forum on fire; at Sabaria<sup>1</sup>, where the Emperor took up his residence for a time, an owl seated on the roof of the Imperial bath-house had given utterance to dismal hootings, and had remained unharmed and unterrified by all the arrows and stones which the soldiers had hurled at her. One night (the last, as it proved, of Valentinian's life) he saw in a dream his absent wife, the beautiful Justina, sitting with dishevelled hair and arrayed in mean attire as if some change in her fortunes were at hand. He rose next morning depressed and saddened by his dream, and with lowering brow ordered his horse to be brought round. The animal reared up on its hind legs; the right hand of the young groom who was helping his master to mount came somewhat roughly in contact with the Imperial person: in his rage Valentinian ordered the offending member to be cut off, but Cerealis, Tribune of the Imperial Stable and

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.Evil  
omens.<sup>1</sup> Stein-am-Anger in Hungary.



BOOK I. brother-in-law of the Emperor, ventured to postpone for  
CH. 3. a little space the execution of the order, and thereby,  
as the event proved, saved the lad's limb and perhaps  
his life.

Death of  
Valen-  
tinian.

A little later in the day came the long-expected embassy of the Quadi, and was admitted to an audience. The contrast was a striking one between the Emperor of the Romans<sup>1</sup>, tall, erect, with limbs of admirable symmetry, with steel cuirass, and helmet adorned with gold and gems, a stern gleam in his blue-gray eyes, and 'looking every inch an Emperor,' and over against him the squalid forms of the ambassadors of the Quadi, with their breastplates of horn sewn upon linen jackets, so that the pieces overlapped one another like the feathers of a bird, shrinking, bending, seeking by every motion of their bodies to appease the anger of the terrible Augustus. 'They had not intended to declare war against the Empire. No assembly of the chiefs had been convened. Nothing had been done by the regular council of the nation. A few robber-hordes close to the river had done deeds which they regretted, and for which they must not be held responsible. But indeed that fortress (apparently one of Valentinian's many fortresses, erected on the left bank of the Danube) should not have been built upon their territory, and it stirred the clownish hearts of their people to frenzy to behold it.' At the mention of the fortress the Emperor struck in with terrible voice, upbraiding the barbarians with ingratitude for all the benefits of Rome. They continued to endeavour to soothe him. His voice faltered, but not from softened feeling. His attendants saw that he was

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus, xxx. 9. 6; xxix. 3. 4; xxvii. 10. 11; xvii. 12. 2.



about to fall, wrapped his purple round him, and bore him to an inner room, that the barbarians might not look upon the weakness of an Emperor. In the full torrent of his rage he had been seized with some sudden malady, probably apoplexy<sup>1</sup>, and after a terrible struggle with death the strong, tempestuous man died, apparently before nightfall. He had lived fifty-four years, and reigned nearly twelve. His body was embalmed and taken to Constantinople, and there laid in the Church of the Apostles, now the recognised burial-place of the Christian Emperors.

According to the system of partnership and succession which had been devised by Diocletian and accepted in a modified form by Valentinian, Valens and Gratian should now have peaceably taken up the sovereignty the chief share in which had fallen from the dead Emperor's hands. But there were complications, both in the Imperial family and in the camp by the Danube, which led to a strange result. Some seven or eight years before his death<sup>2</sup> Valentinian had put away his wife, Severa, and married the beautiful Sicilian, Justina, widow of the usurper Magnentius, who lost both the diadem and his life in his struggle with Constantius (353)<sup>3</sup>. Justina had borne to her husband three

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Family left  
by Valentinian.

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus' description seems to waver between apoplexy and hæmorrhage of the lungs.

<sup>2</sup> Before 369, in which year Constantian, brother of Justina and 'kinsman to Valentinian,' was slain by the robber bands in Gaul: but probably after 367, when Gratian, son of Severa, was associated in the Empire. (See Tillemont, *Hist. des Empereurs*, v. 50.)

<sup>3</sup> Accepting the positive statement of Zosimus as to Justina's widowhood I reject, as Tillemont is disposed to do, the story told by Socrates, as to her having been a maid of honour to Severa, who is represented as having incautiously praised her beauty to Valentinian and thus prepared the way for her own repudiation.

BOOK I. daughters, one at least of whom when she grew up to  
 CH. 3.

womanhood reproduced the loveliness of her mother, and one son who, when his father gasped out his life in the tent at Bregetio, was a little child of four or five years old. The Empress and her children were not at the camp, but at a villa called Murocincta, a hundred miles distant from Bregetio, when the event occurred which made them a widow and orphans.

Uneasy  
 feeling in  
 the camp.

In the camp there was an uneasy feeling stirring that the occasion was a good one to acclaim a new Emperor. Gratian, princely and popular, but after all only a lad of some sixteen years of age, was absent at distant Trier; Valens, disliked and despised, was at the yet more distant Antioch. Why should not the army proclaim some one of its own most trusted generals Emperor, and in so doing at once save the State from misgovernment by feeble rulers and enrich itself by the handsome donative which the new Emperor was sure to bestow on the authors of his greatness?

Probable  
 competi-  
 tors for  
 the purple.

There were three officers in high command in the Danubian army on one of whom the choice of the tumultuary electorate, if that electorate were assembled, seemed certain to fall. These were Sebastian, Aequitius, and Merobaudes. Count Sebastian, who had formerly held the high military command of Duke of Egypt, and had been, together with Procopius, in charge of the troops which were to co-operate from the direction of Armenia in Julian's invasion of Persia<sup>1</sup>, was now engaged in ravaging the country of the Quadi. The heathen historian, Ammianus, describes him as a man of even temperament and a lover of repose<sup>2</sup>, but

<sup>1</sup> See p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Amm. Mar. xxx. 10. 3.

the Church historians charge him with the Manichean heresy and with the infliction of cruel tortures during the reign of Constantius on the confessors of the Catholic Church at Alexandria<sup>1</sup>. Aequitius, whom we have already seen during the Procopian rebellion, faithfully holding the Illyrian provinces for the house of Valentinian<sup>2</sup>, and who had shared the honours of the consulship in the preceding year with Gratian, was still apparently 'Magister Militum per Illyricum,' the highest military officer between the Rhine and the Danube. Merobaudes was probably a Frankish chief who had taken service under the Empire, and owing to his skill in military matters had risen to high command<sup>3</sup>, and to the yet higher honour of an alliance by marriage with the Imperial house<sup>4</sup>.

But for his barbarian extraction the choice of the soldiery might very possibly have fallen on Merobaudes. Aequitius, whose surly temper had caused him to be rejected as a candidate for the purple eleven years before<sup>5</sup>, had probably not grown less surly with advancing age. It was generally understood that the choice of the soldiers and of the inferior officers favoured Sebastian, and that if he appeared in camp he would be acclaimed Emperor.

The elevation of Sebastian would probably have meant the depression, perhaps the ruin, of Aequitius

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

Sebastian's  
elevation  
prevented.

<sup>1</sup> Socrates, ii. 28 (quoting Athanasius).

<sup>2</sup> See p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly that of Magister Militum, as Zosimus (iv. 17) seems to imply.

<sup>4</sup> This is supposed to be the meaning of Victor's phrase 'Merobaude propinquo' (Epitome 45).

<sup>5</sup> See p. 130.

BOOK I.  
CH. 3.

and Merobaudes. Self-interest therefore co-operated with loyalty to the family of Valentinian and dread of civil war to make them conspire against his election, and their measures were taken with much dexterity. Merobaudes was absent with Sebastian in the land of the Quadi when the great Emperor closed his eyes at Bregetio. A message was sent, as if in Valentinian's name, concealing the fact of his death to Merobaudes, commanding his immediate return. The keen-witted Frank, suspecting the real state of the case, announced to his soldiers that a barbarian invasion of Gaul necessitated their return to the banks of the Rhine. Having recrossed the Danube, and broken down the bridge of boats to prevent the Quadi from following him, he sent Sebastian, his inferior in command, on some errand which removed him far from the theatre of events. Then returning in haste to the camp, he caused the child Valentinian and his mother to be sent for with all speed from Murocincta. Appealing to that half-formed instinct of loyalty to the children of a dead Emperor, upon which Procopius had traded when he ostentatiously nursed the little Constantia in his arms, Merobaudes and Aequitius presented the beautiful Empress and her child to the assembled soldiery and obtained their acclamations for Valentinian II. Some fear was felt as to the manner in which the news of this further division of the Imperial heritage might be received at Trier and at Antioch; but whatever may have been the feelings of Valens, Gratian at all events recognised the loyalty to his house which had prompted the deed, welcomed his infant brother as a partner of his throne, and showed no disfavour to the authors of his

Valen-  
tinian II  
proclaimed  
Emperor.



elevation<sup>1</sup>. In the division of the Empire Gratian reserved for himself the three great Dioceses of Britain, Gaul, and Spain; Justina, in the name of the little Valentinian, and with perhaps some undefined subordination to Gratian, governed Italy, Africa, and Illyricum. The share of Valens remained such as it had been in the lifetime of Valentinian.

The soldiers, of course, obtained their donative, as large a one doubtless as if they had strengthened the Empire by the election of a wise statesman or a valiant soldier. But the curious mixture of elective and hereditary right which characterised this 'family partnership in Empire' was certainly not producing beneficial results for the State. The one strong and capable ruler, Valentinian, having fallen, there were left at the head of affairs an incapable and undignified rustic, lately the lackey of his brother, a bright and winning lad in his teens, and a child under five years of age, necessarily in the leading strings of his beautiful but foolish and impetuous mother. These were not the kind of pilots that the vessel of the State required in the troubled and perilous waters which she was rapidly approaching.

<sup>1</sup> Richter discusses at considerable length (pp. 281-295) the circumstances connected with the elevation of Valentinian II, but in some points his conjectural restoration of the history does not seem to be warranted by the authorities. He says more than the text of Ammianus justifies him in saying as to the unpopularity of the family of Valentinian, and especially of Gratian, with the soldiers at Bregetio; and though Gratian condoned the elevation of his brother, Merobaudes does not appear to have acted so entirely in Gratian's interest as Richter represents. He probably intended to exert a considerable influence on the child-Emperor's government himself, and was in great measure 'fighting for his own hand' at Bregetio.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE LAST YEARS OF VALENS.

#### Authorities.

##### *Sources:—*

- BOOK I. AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS ; JORDANES ; previously described.  
CH. 4. ZOSIMUS (in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*. Edited by Bekker ; Bonn, 1837).

The period during which Zosimus flourished cannot be accurately determined. He refers to a hymn composed by the philosopher Syrianus (about 431), and is himself referred to by the Church historian, Evagrius (about 591). These two landmarks give us an interval of 160 years in any part of which he might possibly have lived. One attempt has been made to fix his career to the very beginning of that period, and another to bring it down to the time of Anastasius (491-518); but upon the whole, from about 450 to 480 seems the most probable time to which to assign his literary activity. In anticipating some future books of his history (never in fact written), he says (i. 58), 'When I shall have come to those times in which the Roman Empire, being barbarised, has been reduced to a little space, and that filled with corruption,' and in another place (iv. 59), 'The Empire of the Romans having been diminished till it has become the home of the barbarians, or else being altogether bereft of its inhabitants, has been brought into such a condition that the cities would not recognise the regions in which they once stood.' These read like the words of a man who has witnessed the destruction of Aquileia and the Fall of the Western Empire. But we must admit that they might have been written almost at any time between the sack of Rome (410) and the accession of Justinian (527). The title of the work says that Zosimus

was Count and Ex-Advocate of the Treasury. He therefore probably resided at Constantinople.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

The history of Zosimus, which was divided into six books, was intended to trace the decline of the Roman power, as another Greek historian, Polybius, had traced its culmination. It begins with the death of Commodus and ends very abruptly in the year 410, just before Alaric's third siege of Rome. It will be seen therefore that it is not strictly a contemporary authority for any portion of the ground which it covers; but we are able to assert with some confidence who are the authors from whose works it is chiefly compiled. These are DEXIPPUS, whom he has used for the greater part of his first book, EUNAPIUS, upon whom the rest of the first and the whole of the four following books down to the twenty-fifth chapter of the fifth are founded, and OLYMPIODORUS, for the scanty remainder of his work. Dexippus (*cir.* 254-278) was described in the first chapter. Eunapius (*cir.* 347-414) will be noticed in connection with the life of Theodosius, and Olympiodorus (between 400 and 450?) in a later chapter in this book. All three of the authors from whom Zosimus has thus drawn may be considered contemporary authorities of the first class, but it is important to remember that they, like himself, were heathens—Eunapius, a bitter and polemical heathen, and that Zosimus therefore always gives us that view of the history of the times which is least favourable to the Christian Emperors. One of the chief causes to which he attributed the downfall of the Empire, was the abandonment of the old religion and the withdrawal by Theodosius of the sums which had formerly been devoted to the heathen sacrifices (*iv.* 59).

It is somewhat marvellous that the work of such a man who delights in maligning Constantine, Theodosius, and all the Imperial names that were dearest to the Catholic Church should have been preserved through the Middle Ages: but it is a fortunate chance, for this work is often of the highest interest to us as preserving the thoughts and arguments of the advocates of the lost cause, Paganism. A few sentences of Zosimus are probably the best motto that could be chosen for St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, as explaining the thesis which the Christian apologist wishes to disprove.

His fondness for oracles, portents, and old mythological tradi-

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

tions is extraordinary, and often mars the artistic effect of his work. Thus, for instance, in the very crisis of Alaric's march into Italy (408), having mentioned the name of Aemona (Laybach), he interrupts himself in order to repeat a wild story about the Argonauts sailing up the Danube and the Save, and then dragging the Argo fifty miles overland to the Adriatic. His love of the heathen-marvellous is so interesting a fact in the history of human thought, that I have ventured, at some risk of wearying the reader, to transfer some of these stories to my pages.

The ignorance of geography displayed by Zosimus is almost incredible. He confuses the Dniester and the Danube, Lugdunum (*Lyons*) and Singidunum (*Belgrade*) (iv. 35), and he thinks that the Apennine mountains made the frontier of Pannonia and Noricum (v. 29).

His style is often obscure, and it is extremely difficult to discover from his writings the true historical sequence of events. This defect is perhaps partly due to his following Eunapius, who as a professor of rhetoric speaks with unconcealed contempt of chronological accuracy which he leaves to bailiffs and astronomers, deeming it unworthy of an historian (p. 60, ed. Bonn). The bitterness and peevish temper of Zosimus contrast unfavourably with the generally calm and judicial tone of Ammianus. But such as he is, he is almost our only historian deserving of the name, for a space of twenty years (389-409), and the darkness becomes dark indeed when his taper goes out.

By the premature death of Valentinian, his brother, the small-souled, unkingly-looking Valens, obtained the foremost place in the Empire of the world.

Valens at  
Antioch.

Not unnaturally, considering the recent fateful encounter between the two monarchies, and the many great qualities of its ruler, Sapor, Persia was the country towards which at this time the eyes of all Romans, at least of all Eastern Romans, were turned with the most anxious apprehensions. Hence it was that, at any rate after the Gothic war was ended, Valens gave the largest share of his time and attention to the affairs of







Armenia and Mesopotamia, and resided generally at Syrian Antioch rather than at Thracian Constantinople. BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

As has been already hinted, the zeal shown by Valens in the persecution of those who practised unlawful arts was even fiercer than that of his brother in the West. This persecution raged furiously in the province of Asia and its capital Ephesus, where 'those which used curious arts' were compelled to 'bring their books together' by an influence very different from the persuasive teaching of the Apostle Paul, at the bidding of a fierce proconsul named Festus, who slew and banished relentlessly those suspected of such dark practisings with the infernal powers. There is reason to fear that not only there, but over the whole Roman world, many books which would now be of priceless value, as illustrating the philosophy and theology of the classical nations, perished at this time. Arts of  
divina-  
tion.  
  
Zosimus,  
iv. 15.

One reason why the Emperors and the Provincial governors who did their bidding waged such fierce war against the professors of divination, doubtless was that their art was connected with a certain feverish anxiety as to the political future of the Empire. The one question of most intense interest to the reigning Emperors as well as to millions of their subjects was, 'How long shall we be Emperors, and who will succeed us?' Nor will the nervous interest both of governors and governed in this question seem unnatural, when we remember that the Emperor was the source of all promotion and of all legislation—a Prime Minister, as it were, appointed for life, unchecked by Parliament, and with a chance, but not a certainty, of transmitting his power to his son. Or, to go across the Atlantic for an analogy to his position, if the quadriennial election of

BOOK I. the President of the United States raises to fever-pitch  
 CH. 4. the passions of all the army of office-holders, past, present, and to come, much more would the dark possibilities and the dramatic surprises of a change in the Imperial dynasty, stir the hopes or rouse the fears of a population, among whom office of one kind or another was rapidly becoming the only barrier which separated the happy from the destitute.

Affair of  
 Theodorus.

A few years before the death of Valentinian<sup>1</sup>, his younger brother was driven into an agony of cruel terror by the discovery of a meeting somewhat resembling a *séance* of modern Spiritualists, the object of which was to extort from the unseen powers the name of his future successor. There was a certain young man at Antioch, named Theodorus, descended from an ancient family in Gaul, highly educated, modest, self-controlled, one who had reached the important position of an Imperial notary, but who always seemed greater than his office, and marked out by Fate for some higher station than that to which he had already attained. Some persons of rank and influence at Antioch met together, probably under cover of night, to consult the diviners as to the name of the future Emperor. A little tripod ('like a Delphic cauldron'), made of laurel wood and consecrated with mysterious songs and choral dances, was set in the middle of the house, which had

<sup>1</sup> We get the account of this affair of Theodorus from Ammianus, xxix. 1, and Zosimus, iv. 13-15. Ammianus appears to date it in 371, but his narrative does not always strictly follow the chronological order. Tillemont, I know not why, fixes it in 374, and this date has been generally accepted by historians. But, as he himself points out, Themistius in his eleventh oration, uttered in 373, uses language as to a recently discovered conspiracy, which would fit very well this of Theodorus.

been purified by the burning of Arabian spices. The tripod was placed upon a round dish made of diverse metals, and with the twenty-four letters of the alphabet marked upon its circumference. Thereafter entered a person clad in linen and with linen socks upon his feet, bearing in his hand branches of an auspicious tree, who, after again singing a magic song, leaned over the sacred tripod and shook up and down a flaxen thread, very fine, to which a ring was attached. As the ring danced up and down, it touched the letters of the metal dish, and thus words, and sentences, and even hexameter verses like those uttered by the priests of Apollo at Miletus, were delivered to the bystanders. The question was put, 'Who shall succeed the present Emperors?' The ring spelt out the letters ΘΕΟΔ (Theod.<sup>1</sup>), and, without waiting for more, all the bystanders agreed that the high-born and accomplished Theodorus would be the future Emperor.

Theodorus himself had not been present at this performance, but when he was informed of it by Euserius, a man of great literary attainments, and who had formerly been Prefect of Asia, his own earnest desire was at once to go and report the whole affair to the Emperor. In an evil hour for himself he was dissuaded from doing so: for as Euserius said to him, 'You are guiltless of any lawless desire to rule: and if Fate have ordained for you that great advancement, nothing that you can do will either help or hinder it.' However, there seems reason to think that the dazzling prospect which the dreams of these diviners opened before Theodorus did in some degree divert him from his duty as a subject,

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus makes the fatal letters only three, but Zosimus and Socrates agree in counting four.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

and that the capital sentence which was pronounced and promptly executed upon him was justified by real acts of *laesa majestas*<sup>1</sup>. But when Valens discovered that many of the nobles, officials, and philosophers of Antioch had been engaged in speculations on the contingency of his death, and endeavours to wrest from futurity the name of his successor, his suspicious rage became almost madness. A perfect reign of terror followed. As Theodorus had been a heathen and a friend of the philosophers, the most eminent philosophers of Asia were put to death, the chief among these heathen martyrs being that same Maximus who, years before, had called the attention of his master Julian to Valentinian's contempt of heathen ordinances<sup>2</sup>. A governor of Bithynia, an *ex-vicarius* of Britain, a pro-consul of Asia, two consuls related to the family of the Emperor Constantius, notaries, officers of the palace, and multitudes of smaller officials were accused, and not a few of them were put to death. According to one authority<sup>3</sup> many absolutely innocent men, whose names began with the three fated letters, such as Theodorus, Theodotus, Theodosius, Theodulus, and the like, were sacrificed to the Emperor's fears: and many, to avoid the danger to which they found themselves suddenly exposed, changed the names which they had borne from infancy.

<sup>1</sup> 'High Treason.' Both Ammianus and Zosimus seem to admit the justice of the execution of Theodorus. His son, Icarius, who was a poet of some reputation in his day, was apparently Comes Orientis after Proculus had been removed from that office (about 384). He wrote a poem in praise of the Emperor Theodosius (cf. Sievers: *Das Leben des Libanius*, p. 163).

<sup>2</sup> See p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> Socrates, iv. 19.



While the leaders in the spiritualistic adventure were suffering the torture<sup>1</sup> to which even Roman citizens were now liable to be subjected when the safety of the Emperor was at stake, the taunting question was put to them, 'Did the divination which you practised foretell your present tortures?' Upon which they uttered some oracular verses which seem almost to have passed into a proverb<sup>2</sup> clearly foretelling death as the penalty for those who like them had sought to pry into futurity, but also containing dark hints of retribution at the hands of the Furies, of fire and blood-stained garments awaiting the Emperor and his servants. The last three lines of the oracle gasped out by the groaning victims ran thus :

'Not unavenged our blood shall sink to the ground, for against you  
Glooming Tisiphoné shall array portentous destruction,  
All in the plains of *Mimas* when Ares rages around you.'

At the time of Valentinian's death, the fury of this persecution of the philosophers and the diviners had already abated, but, especially at Antioch, it had left a peculiar mental reaction behind it. The dwellers in the soft and licentious city by the Orontes seem to have settled down into a state of apathetic discontent, varied by anticipations, to themselves only half intelligible, of some terrible approaching doom. In after time, when the doom had fallen, men remembered what presages might have been drawn from the dismal cry of birds at night, from the howls of wolves, and the unusual mists which had so often blotted out the sunrise. Nay, the

<sup>1</sup> 'Fodicatis lateribus' (Amm. Mar. xxix. i. 33). This form of torture seems to have consisted in lacerating the sides of the victim with an iron claw (ungula).

<sup>2</sup> 'Versus illos notissimos' (Amm. Mar. u. s.).



BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

Ammi-  
anus, xxxi.  
1. 2.

mouths of men, as on so many previous occasions of impending disaster to the State, had uttered unconsciously the plainest prophecies. When any of the common people of Antioch imagined himself wronged, he would cry out in the meaningless slang of the streets, 'May Valens be burned alive [if I will put up with this]!' And as the Emperor had presented the city with one of those usual tokens of Imperial munificence, a magnificent range of *Thermae* (hot baths), one might hear every morning the voices of the town-criers calling to the people, 'Bring wood, bring wood, bring wood, to heat the baths of Valens.' Men looked back afterwards upon these and similar presages, and wondered that they had been so blind to the signs of coming woe.

Irruption  
of the  
Huns.  
372?

Meanwhile, in the steppes of Astrakhan, and on the northern slopes of the Caucasus, events were progressing among unknown and squalid barbarians, which, co-operating with the internal rottenness of the Empire, were to bring about not only the violent death of Valens, but many another change of more enduring consequence. The *Huns*, a nation whom we may, with sufficient, if not with scientific accuracy, describe as a vast Tartar horde, allured or impelled from Asia by some unknown force, fell first upon the Tartar or semi-Tartar nation of the Alani, who dwelt between the Volga and the Don, slew many, and made vassal-confederates of the rest, and with forces thus swollen pressed on toward the broad domains of Hermanric, king of the Ostrogoths.

It will be necessary, when the descendants of these invaders in the third generation dash themselves upon the Roman legions, to consider their ethnological position somewhat more closely. At present the collision

is only Hun against Goth, and therefore it is sufficient to learn from the pages of Jordanes what the Goth thought of these new and unexpected enemies. This is what he says in the twenty-fourth chapter of his book 'on Gothic affairs.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

'We have ascertained that the nation of the Huns, who surpassed all others in atrocity, came thus into being. When Filimer, fifth king of the Goths after their departure from Sweden, was entering Scythia, with his people, as we have before described, he found among them certain sorcerer-women, whom they call in their native tongue Haliorunnas (or Al-runas), whom he suspected and drove forth from the midst of his army into the wilderness. The unclean spirits that wander up and down in desert places, seeing these women, made concubines of them; and from this union sprang that most fierce people [of the Huns], who were at first little, foul, emaciated creatures, dwelling among the swamps, and possessing only the shadow of human speech by way of language.

Gothic tradition about the origin of the Huns.

'According to Priscus they settled first on the further [eastern] shore of the Sea of Azof, lived by hunting, and increased their substance by no kind of labour, but only by defrauding and plundering their neighbours. Once upon a time, when they were out hunting beside the Sea of Azof, a hind suddenly appeared before them, and having entered the waters of that shallow sea, now stopping, now dashing forward, seemed to invite the hunters to follow on foot. They did so, through what they had before supposed to be trackless sea with no land beyond it, till at length the shore of Scythia [Southern Russia] lay before them. As soon as they set foot upon it, the stag that had guided them thus

BOOK I. far mysteriously disappeared. This, I trow, was done  
CH. 4. by those evil spirits that begat them, for the injury of the Scythians [Goths]. But the hunters who had lived in complete ignorance of any other land beyond the Sea of Azof were struck with admiration of the Scythian land and deemed that a path known to no previous age had been divinely revealed to them. They returned to their comrades to tell them what had happened, and the whole nation resolved to follow the track thus opened out before them. They crossed that vast pool, they fell like a human whirlwind on the nations inhabiting that part of Scythia, and offering up the first tribes whom they overcame, as a sacrifice to victory, suffered the others to remain alive, but in servitude.

‘With the Alani especially, who were as good warriors as themselves, but somewhat less brutal in appearance and manner of life, they had many a struggle, but at length they wearied out and subdued them. For, in truth, they derived an unfair advantage from the intense hideousness of their countenances. Nations whom they would never have vanquished in fair fight fled horrified from those frightful—faces I can hardly call them, but rather—shapeless black collops of flesh, with little points instead of eyes. No hair on their cheeks or chins gives grace to adolescence or dignity to age, but deep furrowed scars instead, down the sides of their faces, show the impress of the iron which with characteristic ferocity they apply to every male child that is born among them, drawing blood from its cheeks before it is allowed its first taste of milk. They are little in stature, but lithe and active in their motions, and especially skilful in riding, broad-shouldered, good at the use of the bow and arrows, with sinewy necks, and always

holding their heads high in their pride. To sum up, these beings under the form of man hide the fierce nature of the beast.' BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

Such was the impression made upon the mind of the European barbarian by his first contact with the Asiatic savage. The moment was an eventful one in the history of the world. Hitherto, since the great migration of the Aryan nations, Europe had arranged her own destinies, unmolested by any Asiatic invaders save the great armaments which at the bidding of Darius and Xerxes marched onwards to their doom. Now the unconscious prototypes of Zinghis Khan, of Timour, and of Bajazet had come from the steppes of Turkestan to add their element of complication to the mighty problem. Historical  
importance  
of this  
Asiatic  
migration.

It need not be said that the narrative of Jordanes is not here offered as trustworthy history. The battles with the Alani must in all probability have been over before the Huns first saw the Sea of Azof, and the latter squalid tribe were no more descended from Gothic women than from demon-fathers. But the passage is worth reading, and even reading again, for the vividness with which it brings the new in-comers into Europe before our eyes, and contrasts them with other tribes, like them in the deadliness of their onset against Rome, but unlike in all else.

The fair-haired, fair-skinned, long-bearded and majestic Goth on the one hand ; the little swarthy smooth-faced Tartar Hun on the other : here the shepherd merging into the agriculturist, there the mere hunter : here the barbarian standing on the very threshold of civilisation, there the irreclaimable savage : here a nation already in great measure accepting the faith of Contrast  
between  
Goths and  
Huns.



BOOK I. Christ and reading the Scriptures in their own tongue,  
 CH. 4. there brutal heathens. Such was the chasm which separated the Goths and the Teutons generally from the Huns.

After the Alani of the Don<sup>1</sup> were beaten down into subjection, the Huns with a sudden rush broke in upon the wide-spreading and comparatively fertile districts<sup>2</sup> which owned the sway of Hermanric, king of the Greuthungi or Ostrogoths. The great king—the new Alexander, as his Greek neighbours called him, when they wished to propitiate his favour—was now in extreme old age, verging, if we may believe Jordanes, on a hundred years and ten. His rule over the nominally subject tribes around him was probably loose and ill compacted, and some of them eagerly caught at the opportunity afforded by the Hunnish invasion to break loose from his empire. Among the revolted was ‘the faithless nation of the Rosomoni<sup>3</sup>,’ whose king seems to have deserted the Ostrogothic standard on the field of battle, perhaps in the first skirmish with the Hunnish invaders. In his rage Hermanric took a cruel and cowardly revenge. As the king had escaped from his power, he ordered Sunilda, his wife, to be torn in

<sup>1</sup> ‘Halanorum quos Greuthungis confines Tanaitas consuetudo nominavit’ (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 3). Apparently, therefore, the Alani, like the Cossacks of later times, took a surname from the great river by which they dwelt.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Ermenrichi late patentes et uberes pagos repentino impetu per-ruperunt’ (Ibid.).

<sup>3</sup> ‘Rosomonorum gens infida’ (Jordanes, xxiv). All this story about Sunilda is peculiar to Jordanes, and is probably part of some old Gothic saga. Von Wietersheim has pointed out that a story somewhat similar to this is told in the Eddas, of Svanhild as the daughter of Sigurd Fafnisbane, her husband Jörmunrek (Hermanric), and her sons Sörli and Hamdie (Sarus and Ammius).



pieces by wild horses. Her brothers, Sarus and Ammius, took up the blood-feud, and though they failed to kill Hermanric, wounded him severely in the side. The wound prevented him from going forth to battle: his warriors everywhere yielded to the terrible Asiatics: the Visigoths came not to help their Ostrogothic overlord: in despair at having lived so long, only to see the ruin of his empire, the aged Hermanric escaped from his troubles by suicide<sup>1</sup>. The power of the Ostrogoths was broken, and Balamber, king of the Huns, was now supreme in Scythia. Hunimund, son of Hermanric, was permitted to become king of the Ostrogoths, but on condition of accepting the over-lordship of the Huns: and for the following eighty years his people had no other position than that of a subject race in the great and loosely-knit Hunnish confederacy<sup>2</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

Death of  
Herman-  
ric.  
375?

Overthrow  
of the Os-  
trogothic  
Empire.

<sup>1</sup> 'Magnorum discriminum metum voluntariâ morte sedavit' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 3). Jordanes, though he cleverly contrives to avoid saying so much as this, not obscurely hints it.

<sup>2</sup> The inclination of the German critics is to spread the 'Hunnen-einfall' over five years, thus: '372, attack upon the Alani; 374-375, overthrow of the Ostrogoths; 375-376, defeats of Athanaric.' There is a good deal to be said in support of this view, and there can be little doubt that at least the wars with the Alani were over before the commencement of 376. Against any further extension of the time are to be set the strong expressions of Jordanes and Ammianus as to the rapidity of the Hunnish conquests ('ad Scythiam properant . . . quasi quidam turbo gentium,' says Jordanes. 'Ermenrichi late patentes et uberes pagos repentino impetu perruperunt . . . qui vi subitae procellae percussus . . . voluntariâ morte sedavit; 'Cujus post obitum rex Vithimiris creatus restitit aliquantis per Halanis' are the words of Ammianus), and the entry in one of the Latin Chronicles (Descriptio Consulium Idatio Episcopo adscripta), which seems to assign the whole Hunno-Gothic campaign to the year 376 ('Valente Aug. V. et Valentiniano Juniore Augusto. His consulibus victi et expulsi sunt Gothi a gente Unorum et suscepti sunt in Romanîâ pro misericordiâ jussione Augusti Valentis'). I do not see that the point is one of

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

376.

There was, indeed, a small section of the community which chose Withimir (or Winithar) of the royal race of the Amals, but not a son of Hermanric, for their king, and under his leadership attempted a brave but hopeless resistance to the overpowering enemy<sup>1</sup>. After much slaughter he was slain in battle, and the remnant of the people, under the nominal sovereignty of the boy Wideric, son of the late king, but really led by his guardians, Alatheus and Saphrax, made their way westwards to the Dniester, and joined apparently in the defence which their Visigothic kinsmen were making by that river.

Defeat of  
Athanaric  
by the  
Huns.  
376.

For the refusal of the Visigoths to answer the call of Hermanric had brought them no immunity from the attacks of the terrible invaders. The swarthy riders on their little ponies had soon swept across the plains traversed by the Dnieper and the Boug, and Athanaric found that he had to fight for his kingdom and his life against an enemy very different from the warily marching legions of Valens. He pitched his camp by the margin of the Dniester, and apparently fortified an earthen rampart which marked the confines of the Ostrogothic and Visigothic territory<sup>2</sup>. He sent forward Munderic (who

much consequence. The really important event, the hurling of the Visigoths against the Danube frontier of the Empire, unquestionably took place in 376.

<sup>1</sup> The Huns seem to have left the work of crushing this inconsiderable resistance to their confederates the Alani (see quotation from Ammianus in the preceding note).

<sup>2</sup> 'Castris denique prope Danasti margines ac Greuthungorum vallem (?) longius oportune metatis' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 3). I venture to suggest 'vallum' for 'vallem.' When so large a tract of country belonged to the Greuthungi, why should one valley be called 'Greuthungorum vallis'? 'Vallum,' on the other hand, gives a perfect sense.

afterwards entered the Imperial service and was a general on the Arabian frontier) with a colleague named Lagariman and other Gothic nobles, to a distance of twenty miles, to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy, and meanwhile he drew up his army in battle-array. All was leisurely, calm, and apparently scientific in the movements of the Gothic 'Judex': but, unfortunately, he had to deal with an utterly unscientific foe. The Huns, cleverly conjecturing where the main bulk of the Gothic army was posted, avoided that part of the river, found out a ford at some distance, crossed it by moonlight, and fell upon the flank of the unsuspecting Athanaric before a single scout gave notice of their approach. The Goth, stupefied by their onslaught, and dismayed by the death of several of his chiefs, withdrew to the territory of his friendly neighbours, the Taifali, and began to construct a fortified position for the remnant of his army between the mountains of Transylvania and the river Sereth<sup>1</sup>. The Huns pursued him for some distance: but, loaded with spoil and, perhaps, well-nigh sated with killing, they soon relaxed the eagerness of their pursuit.

Meanwhile, the tidings 'that a new and hitherto unknown race of men had fallen like an avalanche' upon the supposed invincible Hermanric and Athanaric spread far and wide throughout the region of 'Gothia,' and everywhere seems to have produced the same feeling, 'We must put the Danube between us and the

Wide-spread  
terror  
of the  
Visigoths,

<sup>1</sup> Thus, as Von Wietersheim points out, we must probably correct the words of Ammianus, 'a superciliis Gerasi fluminis ad usque Danubium . . . muros altius erigebat.' It is almost certain that Athanaric would construct his line of defence westward to the mountains, not eastward to the Danube.

BOOK I. foe.' It was one of those epidemics of terror which are  
 CH. 4. sometimes found among half-civilised races, unworthy,  
 376. certainly, of a brave and high-spirited people, but due  
 in part to the superstitious imaginations described by  
 Jordanes. A Visigothic chief, named Alavivus, was the  
 leader of the new migration, but Fritigern was his  
 second in command, and seems gradually to have ob-  
 tained the foremost place. If the Goths were to obtain  
 a footing on the Roman side of the broad and strong  
 stream, watched as it was by the legions and ships of  
 the Emperor, it could be only as the result of friendly  
 negotiations with Valens; and who so fitting to com-  
 mence these negotiations as Fritigern, the convert to  
 Christianity, and the faithful advocate of the Roman  
 alliance?

who flock  
 to the  
 Danubian  
 frontier of  
 the Em-  
 pire.

So now was seen by those who looked across from the  
 Bulgarian to the Wallachian shore (from Moesia to  
 Dacia, if we use the contemporary geographical terms)  
 a sight the like of which has not often been witnessed  
 in history since the dismayed armies of the Israelites  
 stood beside the Red Sea. It is thus described by the  
 contemporary historian Eunapius<sup>1</sup>.

'The multitude of the Scythians [Goths] escaping  
 from the murderous savagery of the Huns, who spared  
 not the life of woman or of child, amounted to not less  
 than 200,000 men of fighting age [besides old men,  
 women, and children]. These, standing upon the river-  
 bank in a state of great excitement, stretched out their  
 hands from afar with loud lamentations, and earnestly  
 supplicated that they might be allowed to cross over  
 the river, bewailing the calamity that had befallen  
 them, and promising that they would faithfully adhere

<sup>1</sup> P. 48 (Bonn ed.).



to the Imperial alliance if this boon were granted them.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

The authorities of the province to whom this request was made, answered, reasonably enough, that they could not grant it upon their own responsibility, but must refer it to the Emperor at Antioch, in whose council the question was long and earnestly debated. The statesmen of the Empire had indeed come, though they knew it not, to one of the great moments in the history of Rome, to one of those crises when a Yes or a No modifies the course of events for centuries. There was danger, no doubt, in keeping two hundred thousand warriors, maddened by fear and famine, at bay upon the frontiers of the Empire; yet, encumbered as they were by the presence of their wives and children, they would hardly have succeeded in crossing the river in the Emperor's despite<sup>1</sup>. There was danger in admitting them within that river-bulwark: yet, for the greater part of a century, they had been the faithful allies of Rome; they recognised the binding force of a solemn covenant; they were rapidly coming under the influence of civilisation and Christianity. Bringing, as they proposed to bring, their wives and children with them, they gave some pledges to Fortune, and, if they had been justly dealt with, might probably in the course of years have become attached to their Moesian homes, and have formed an iron rampart for the Empire against further barbarian invasion. Or, if this attempt to constitute

376.  
Debates at  
Antioch as  
to the re-  
ception of  
the Goths  
within the  
Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the bolder warriors did attempt forcibly to cross the Danube. Many were drowned, and those who effected a landing were cut to pieces by the Roman soldiers on the opposite shore. The officers who had taken upon themselves the responsibility of this resistance were cashiered by Valens, and narrowly escaped being themselves put to death (Eunapius, p. 49, and Amm. Mar. xxxi. 4-5).



BOOK I. them armed defenders of the Roman soil were too  
CH. 4. venturesome, they might possibly, in that extreme need  
376. of theirs, have been constrained into peaceful pursuits,  
if the surrender of their arms had been made an  
indispensable condition of their entrance upon Roman  
territory.

Mistaken  
policy of  
Valens.

Unfortunately, in that supreme crisis of the Empire, the mediocre intellect and feeble will of Valens, guided by the advice of men who were accomplished only in flattery<sup>1</sup>, decided upon a course which united every possible danger, and secured no possible advantage. His vanity was gratified by the thought that so many stalwart warriors did but crave permission to become his servants. His parsimony—the best trait in his character—discerned a means of filling the Imperial treasury by accepting the unpaid services of these men, while still levying on the provinces the tax which was supposed to be devoted to the hire of military substitutes for the provincials<sup>2</sup>. His unslumbering jealousy of his young and brilliant nephew, Gratian, suggested that in the newly enlisted Goths might one day be found a counterpoise to the veteran legions of Gaul. Moved by these considerations, he decided to transport the fugitives across the Danube. At the same time he laid upon them conditions hard and ignominious, but which if once named ought to have been rigidly enforced; and he himself, by the necessity of the case, contracted obligations to them which it would have required the highest degree of administrative ability to

<sup>1</sup> 'Eruditis adulatoribus' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 4. 4).

<sup>2</sup> 'Et pro militari supplemento, quod provinciatis annuum pendebatur, thesauris accederet auri cumulus magnus' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 4. 4).

discharge. All these details—and it was a case in which details were everything—he left in the hands of dishonest and incapable subordinates, without, apparently, bestowing on them a day of his own thought and labour; and those subordinates, as naturally as possible, brought the Empire to ruin. Notwithstanding the often-quoted saying about ‘the little wisdom with which the world is governed,’ the Divine Providence does generally, in administration as in other branches of conduct, reward human foresight with success: and it branded the haphazard blundering of Valens with signal and disastrous failure.

The conditions upon which the Emperor permitted, and even undertook to accomplish, the transportation of the Goths to the territory of the Empire, were, first, that all the boys who were not yet fit for military service (that is, no doubt, all those whose fathers were men of influence in the Gothic host) should be given up as hostages, and distributed in different parts of the Empire; and second, that the weapons should be handed over to the Roman officials, and that every Goth who crossed the river should do so absolutely unarmed. Later and ecclesiastical historians have added, and laid great stress upon, a third condition, that they should all embrace Christianity, of course in its Arian form; but this stipulation, which is not mentioned by any contemporary authority, and is in itself unlikely, has been probably introduced from some confused remembrance of the previous dealings between Valens and Fritigern, dealings in which the weight of the Imperial name does seem to have been thrown into the scale of Christianity, as understood by the Arians. We may probably, however, conclude with

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

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The conditions imposed on the Goths,

BOOK I. safety, that the only Goths to whom liberty to cross  
 CH. 4. the river was voluntarily conceded by the Emperor  
 376. were these Christian clients of his, the followers of  
 Fritigern.

but not en-  
 forced by  
 the officers  
 of Valens.

The conditions which were imposed destroyed all the grace of the Imperial concession, wounded the home-loving, war-loving Goth in his affections and his pride, and brought him, with a rankling sense of injury in his heart, within the limits of the Empire. But having been imposed, these conditions should have been impartially enforced. As it was, the one stipulation which had now become all-important was disgracefully neglected by the two officers, Lupicinus, Count of Thrace, and Maximus (probably Duke of Moesia<sup>1</sup>), who had charge of the transportation of the barbarians. All day and all night, for many days and nights, the Roman ships of war were crossing and recrossing the stream, conveying to the Moesian shore a multitude which they tried in vain to number. But as they landed, the Roman centurions, thinking only of the shameful plunder to be secured for themselves or their generals, picking out here a fair-faced damsel or a handsome boy for the gratification of the vilest lust, there appropriating household slaves for the service of the villa or strong labourers for the farm, elsewhere pillaging from the waggons the linen tissues or costly fringed carpets which had contributed to the state of the late lords of Dacia<sup>2</sup>—intent on all these mean or

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont gives him this title, but I am not able to trace his authority for it. Ammianus calls him, I think, only 'dux exitiosus.'

<sup>2</sup> Οἱ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπιτραπέντες ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῶν διαβεβηκότων ἤρα παιδαρίου τινὸς λευκοῦ καὶ χαρίεντος τὴν ὄψιν, ὁ δὲ ἡλέει γυναικὸς εὐπροσώπου τῶν αἰχμαλώτων, ὃς δὲ ἦν αἰχμαλώτος ὑπὸ παρθένου, τοὺς δὲ τὸ μέγεθος κατεῖχε τῶν δώρων, τὰ τε

abominable depredations, suffered the warriors of the tribe to march past them with swelling hearts, and with the swords which were to avenge all these injuries not extracted from their scabbards. This hateful picture of sensuality and fatuous greed is drawn for us, not by a Goth, but by two Roman historians<sup>1</sup>; and in looking upon it we seem to understand more clearly why Rome must die.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.  
376.

As the expressed condition on the part of the Goths—the surrender of their arms—was recklessly left unenforced, so the implied condition on the part of the Romans—the feeding of the new settlers—was criminally ignored. It did not require any great gift of statesmanship to see that so large a multitude, suddenly transplanted into an already occupied country, would require for a time some special provision for their maintenance. Corn should have been stored ready for them in the centre town of each district, and those who could not buy, as many could have done, the food needful for their families, should have been permitted to labour for it at some useful work of fortification or husbandry. But everything was left to chance: chance, of course, meant famine; and, according to the concurrent testimony of Goths and Romans<sup>2</sup>, even famine itself was made more severe by the ‘forestalling and regrating’ of Lupicinus and Maximus. These men sold to the strangers at a great price, first beef and mutton, then the flesh of dogs (requisitioned from the Roman inhabitants), diseased meat and filthy offal. The price

Neglect of  
Commis-  
sariat.

λινὰ ὑφάσματα καὶ τὰ τῶν στρωμάτων ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα θυσιανοειδής (Eunapius, pp. 49, 50).

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus and Eunapius.

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes and Ammianus.



BOOK I. of provisions rose with terrible rapidity. The hungry  
 CH. 4. Visigoths would sell a slave—they evidently still pos-  
 376-7. sessed slaves—for a single loaf, or pay ten pounds of  
 silver (equivalent to 40*l.* sterling) for one joint of meat.  
 Slaves, money, and furniture being all exhausted, they  
 began—even the nobles of the nation<sup>1</sup>—to sell their  
 own children. Deep must have been the misery en-  
 dured by those free German hearts before they yielded  
 to the cruel logic of the situation. ‘Better that our  
 children live as slaves, than that they perish before our  
 eyes of hunger.’

Gothic dis-  
 content.

Through the winter months of 376–377, apparently, this systematic robbery went on, and still the Goths would not break their plighted faith to the Emperor. Even as in reading the ghastly history of the Terror in 1793 we are bound to keep ever in memory the miserable lot of the French peasant under the *ancien régime*, so the thought of this cold and calculated cruelty, inflicted by men who had agreed to receive them as allies, and who called themselves their brothers in the faith of Christ, should be present to our minds when we hear of the cruel revenges which in Thrace, in Greece, and in Italy, ‘Gothia’ took on Rome. At length murmurs of discontent reached the ears of Lupicinus, who concentrated his forces round the Gothic settlements. The movement was perceived and taken advantage of by the Ostrogothic chieftains, Alatheus and Saphrax, who, with the young King Wideric under their charge, after sharing in Athanaric’s campaign against the Huns, had fled to the Danube shore and had asked in vain for the same permission that was

<sup>1</sup> ‘Mancipia, inter quae et filii ducti sunt optimatum’ (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 4. 11).



accorded to the Christian Visigoths. Watching their opportunity, they made a dash across the Danube, probably lower down the stream than the point where their countrymen had crossed. Thus the peril of Moesia, already sufficiently grave, was increased by the arrival of a new and considerable host, who were bound by no compact with the Empire, and had given no hostages of their fidelity. Fritigern, who was not yet prepared for an open breach with the Romans, but nevertheless would fain fortify himself by an alliance with these powerful chiefs, slowly marched towards Marcianople<sup>1</sup>, the capital of the Lower (or Eastern) division of Moesia. When he arrived there, with his comrade in arms Alavivus, an event occurred which turned discontent into rebellion, and suspicion into deadly hate. The story is thus told by Jordanes, with some added details from Ammianus.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.  
377.

'It happened in that miserable time that the Roman general, Lupicinus, invited the kings Alavivus and Fritigern to a banquet, at which, as the event showed, he plotted their destruction. But the chiefs, suspecting no guile, went with a small retinue to the feast. Meanwhile the multitude of the barbarians thronged to the gates of the town, and claimed their right as loyal subjects of the Empire to buy the provisions which they had need of in the market. By order of Lupicinus the soldiers pushed them back to a distance from the city. A quarrel arose, and a band

Banquet at  
Marcia-  
nople.

<sup>1</sup> Marcianople corresponds to the modern *Shumla*. The strength of this position as commanding several of the Balkan passes, and near both to the Danube and the Euxine, has been sufficiently impressed upon us by recent events. It and Hadrianople were the great arsenals of Moesia and Thrace, respectively.

BOOK I. of the soldiers were slain and stripped by the barbarians. News of this disturbance was brought to

CH. 4.

377-

Lupicinus as he was sitting at his gorgeous banquet, watching the comic performers and heavy with wine and sleep. He at once ordered that all the Gothic soldiers, who, partly to do honour to their rank, and partly as a guard to their persons, had accompanied the generals into the palace, should be put to death. Thus, while Fritigern was at the banquet, he heard the cry of men in mortal agony, and soon ascertained that it proceeded from his own followers shut up in another part of the palace, whom the Roman soldiers at the command of their general were attempting to butcher. He drew his sword in the midst of the banqueters, exclaimed that he alone could pacify the tumult which had been raised among his followers, and rushed out of the dining-hall with his companions. They were received with shouts of joy by their countrymen outside; they mounted their horses and rode away, determined to revenge their slaughtered comrades<sup>1</sup>.

‘Delighted to march once more under the generalship of one of the bravest of men, and to exchange the prospect of death by hunger for death on the battlefield, the Goths at once rose in arms. Lupicinus, with no proper preparation, joined battle with them at the ninth milestone from Marcianople, was defeated, and only saved himself by a shameful flight. The barbarians equipped themselves with the arms of the slain legionaries, and in truth that day ended in one

<sup>1</sup> It seems possible that Alavivus was slain at the banquet. Ammianus, who has scrupulously mentioned his name with Fritigern’s up to this point, now speaks of him no more.

blow the hunger of the Goths and the security of the Romans; for the Goths began thenceforward to comport themselves no longer as strangers but as inhabitants, and as lords to lay their commands upon the tillers of the soil throughout all the Northern provinces<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

377.

After war had been thus declared, Fritigern, elated with his success, marched across the Balkans, and appeared in the neighbourhood of Hadrianople. There the incredible folly of the Roman officials, who seem to have been determined 'not to leave one fault uncommitted,' threw another strong Gothic reinforcement into his arms. There were two chieftains named Sueridus and Colias, possibly belonging to the 'Gothi Minores' of Ulfilas, who had long ago entered the service of the Empire, and who were now from their winter-quarters at Hadrianople placidly beholding the contest, without any disposition to side with their invading kinsmen. Suddenly orders arrived from the Emperor that the troops under their command were to march to the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles. The leaders prepared to obey, but made the perfectly reasonable proposal that they should receive an allowance for the expenses of the march, rations for the journey, and be allowed a delay of two days to complete their preparations. Some old grudge connected with depredations committed by the Goths on their property in the suburbs prompted the magistrates of the city to refuse the request; nay more, to arm

Sueridus  
and Colias  
driven into  
rebellion.

<sup>1</sup> Jordanes, cap. xxvi; Amm. Mar. xxxi. 5. There are slight differences between the two narratives which make it not easy satisfactorily to combine them. Jordanes especially makes no mention of Alavivus.

BOOK I. the smiths, of whom there was a large number in  
CH. 4. Hadrianople, the chief arsenal of Thrace, to sound the

377.

trumpets, and to threaten Sueridus and Colias with instant destruction unless they immediately obeyed the Emperor's orders. The Goths at first stood still, unable to comprehend the meaning of this outburst of petulance, but when scowling looks were succeeded by taunting words, and these by actual missiles from the armed artisans, they willingly accepted the offered challenge and fought. Soon a crowd of Romans were lying dead in the streets of Hadrianople. According to the usual custom even of Roman warfare the Goths despoiled the corpses of their arms, and then they marched out of the town to join their countryman Fritigern. The united forces attempted a siege of the city, but in vain; and with an exclamation from Fritigern, 'I do not make war on stone walls,' they broke up their camp and streamed westward and southward through the Rhodope valleys and over the rich province of Thrace<sup>1</sup>. From every quarter the enslaved Goths hastened to the uplifted standard of 'the bravest of men,' eager to avenge upon their oppressors the insults and the blows which they had received since that shameful day of the passage of the Danube.

The Goths  
ravage  
Thrace.

These, and some deserters from among the poorer Provincials<sup>2</sup>, were of great service to the barbarian

<sup>1</sup> For convenience sake I use Thrace in the classical sense, as representing the country between the Balkans and the Aegean. Official Thrace at this time reached northwards to the Danube.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus says that 'to these were joined several persons skilled in tracking out veins of gold, who were not able to bear the heavy burdens of the taxes, and being received with the willing consent of all, they were of great use to the invaders of an unknown country in pointing out the hidden stores of corn and the lurking-places of the



leaders in guiding them to the lurking-places of wealthy Romans, and the secret stores of corn and treasure. Pillage, conflagration, murder, were universal in all the country districts of Thrace. Little children were slain before the eyes of their mothers, and old men, stripped of all their wealth, lamenting their ruined homesteads, and crying out 'that they had already lived too long,' were dragged away into slavery among the barbarians.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.  
377.

When the news of this disastrous issue of the Gothic migration reached the Emperor at Antioch, it naturally plunged him in the deepest anxiety. Yet he left the campaign of 377 to be fought out by his generals, and did not that year appear himself upon the scene. He at once patched up a peace with Persia, withdrew his troops from Armenia, and sent them straight to the field of action in Thrace under two generals, Profuturus and Trajan, whose self-confidence, we are told, was greater than their capacity. Gratian also spared some troops from Gaul; under the command of Richomer, who held the high office of 'Count of the Domestics,' but their numbers were considerably lessened by desertion before they reached the foe.

Action  
taken by  
Valens.

Ammianus blames the strategy of the generals of Valens, who, he thinks, should have avoided anything like a pitched battle with the Goths, and should have gradually worn them down by frequent and harassing encounters. But it is plain that they succeeded in clearing first the Rhodope country, and then the line

fugitives' (xxxi. 6. 6). We learn from Vegetius (a contemporary writer on military affairs) that the Roman generals always endeavoured to have some of these very Thracian miners in their armies in order to conduct the subterranean operations of a siege (iv. 24).



BOOK I. of the Balkans, of the Gothic army (though detached  
CH. 4. bands of plunderers still loitered in the south), and at

377.

last the three generals sat down before the barbarian camp at a place called 'The Willows' (Ad Salices), in the region which we now call the Dobrudscha, between the Danube and the Sea. That the tide of battle should have rolled so far northward seems to show that the Roman generals had not greatly failed in their campaign.

Drawn  
battle  
of 'Ad  
Salices.'

A bloody but indecisive battle followed, of which Ammianus has given us a striking if somewhat turgid description. We see the Goths in their great round encampment of waggons which they themselves called 'carrago,' and with which their Dutch kinsmen in South Africa have lately made us familiar under the name of 'the laager camp'.<sup>1</sup> Those fiery spirits hoped to win the battle on the previous evening. They now pass the night in sleepless excitement, varied by a prolonged supper. The Romans also remain awake, but rather from anxiety than hope. Then with the dawn of day the barbarians, according to their usual custom, renew to one another their oaths of fidelity in battle. The Romans sing a martial song, rising *crescendo* from the lower notes to the higher, which is known to their nation as the *barritus*. The barbarians, with less of harmony, make the air resound with the praises of their martial ancestors. (Would that the historian could have taken down for us from the mouth of some captive Goth a specimen of one of these ancestral songs!) Then the Goths try, but not with great success, to gain some rising ground from which they may rush down in fury on the foe. The

<sup>1</sup> 'Ad orbis rotundi figuram multitudine digestâ plaustrorum tamquam intramuranis cohibitum spatiis' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 7. 5).

missile weapons fly, the Romans, joining shield to shield, form the celebrated *testudo*, and advance with firm step. The barbarians dash down upon them their great clubs, whose blackened ends are hardened in the fire, or stab those who resist most obstinately with the points of their swords. Thus for a time they break the left wing of the Imperial army, but a strong support comes up, and the Roman line is restored. The hail of flying javelins rattles on unceasingly. The horsemen on both sides pursue the fugitives, striking at their heads and backs; the foot-soldiers follow, and hamstring the fallen to prevent their continuing their escape. So, while both nations are fighting with undiminished ardour, the sun goes down upon scenes whose ghastliness our historian describes with unnecessary minuteness, and after all the battle of the Salices is neither lost nor won. Next day the bodies of the chiefs on both sides are buried. Those of the common soldiers are left to the vultures, which at that time fed fat upon human flesh. Years after, Ammianus himself appears to have seen the heaps of whitened bones which still denoted the site of the great battle<sup>1</sup>.

After this indecisive battle the Goths remained 'in laager' for seven days. The Romans retired to Marcianople, but succeeded, owing to the inactivity of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Reliqua peremptorum corpora dirae volucres consumpserunt, adsuetæ illo tempore cadaveribus pasci, ut indicant nunc usque albentes ossibus campi.' Compare Claudian (writing of these times but of a slightly different place)—

'Dicite, Bisaltae, vel qui Pangaea juvencis  
Scinditis, offenso quantæ sub vomere putres  
Dissiliant glebis galeae, vel qualia rastris  
Ossa peremptorum resonent immania regum.'

In Prim. Cons. Stilichonis, i. 134-7.

BOOK I. barbarians, in shutting many detached parties of the  
CH. 4.

377-8.

Coalition of  
Goths and  
Huns  
against  
Rome.

Goths into sequestered valleys among the Balkans, where they perished of famine. Richomer, however, in the autumn returned to Gaul, which was believed to be in danger of invasion; and, perhaps in consequence of this diminution of the Imperial forces, before the close of the year, we find the Goths again holding the Balkan line against Saturninus, Master of the Horse, who had been sent to reinforce Trajan and Profuturus: and not only so, but having sent invitations to some of their late enemies, the Huns and the Alani—for by this time the Roman was even more hateful than the Hun—they again burst into Thrace, where they committed a fresh series of outrages, the heightened brutality of which seems to be due to the presence of their Tartar auxiliaries.

In the mournful procession that followed in the train of the invaders might be seen mothers with their newborn children in their arms, scarred by the lash of the slave-driver, tender and delicate women longing in vain for death to free them from foreseen dishonour, wealthy nobles hurried away from the smoking ruins of their villas and bewailing the caprice of Fortune, which in a moment had given them in exchange for lordship and luxury, the prospect of the barbarian torture-chamber, the ignominy of the barbarian master's scourge.

Success of  
Frigeridus.

The Teutonic invaders, however, were by no means uniformly victorious. A general named Frigeridus (probably of Frankish extraction) had been sent by Gratian into the Thracian provinces, and had strongly entrenched himself near Beroea. He had shown hitherto but little energy, being, as his friends said, at times incapacitated by cruel attacks of gout, while his enemies insinuated

that the gout was rather the consequence than the cause of his inactivity. Now, however, by one successful stroke he redeemed his military character. The Taifali, a satellite-tribe of the great Gothic confederacy, had crossed the undefended Danube, and under the leadership of a Gothic noble named Farnobius, were roaming over Thrace and Macedon, doing the usual work of devastation. Frigeridus waited till they came near his entrenchments, then sallied forth and inflicted upon them a well-aimed and successful stroke. Farnobius was slain, and the whole band of Taifali and accompanying Goths might have been cut to pieces. But Frigeridus, when they were at his mercy, granted their prayer for life, and sent them into Italy to cultivate as *coloni* the rich alluvial plains in the neighbourhood of Modena, Reggio, and Parma. We do not hear again of these involuntary emigrants, but the fact that such a settlement was desirable or even possible in the fertile valley of the Po shows what desolations had begun to reveal themselves even in the very heart of the Empire. After this victory Frigeridus, who seems to have thoroughly shaken off his former lethargy, set himself to work to fortify the passes of the Balkans, and especially that most important pass, then known as the pass of Succi, in later times as the Iron Gate or Trajan's Gate, over which runs the road from Sophia to Philippopolis. Could his wise defensive policy have been maintained, Thrace at any rate would have been kept clear from the Gothic ravagers, even if Moesia were abandoned to their devastation. But, apparently in the winter of 377, Frigeridus was relieved of the command of the Western troops, which was given to Count Maurus, a fierce, fickle, and corrupt officer, of whom history has nothing memorable



BOOK I. to relate, except that seventeen years before this time  
CH. 4. he was at Paris, serving as one of the front-rank men in the legion of the Petulantes when Julian was proclaimed Augustus by the insurgent soldiery, and that he, when no diadem was at hand, and when the necklace of Helena, Julian's wife, and a horse's collar had both been proposed and rejected as unsuitable, took from his neck the torque which he wore as bearer of the dragon-ensign of the regiment, and placed it on the head of the new Emperor. Maurus appears to have been defeated by the barbarians at the pass of Succ<sup>1</sup>, and fresh hordes of them probably poured southward into Thrace over the undefended barrier.

Campaign  
of 378 in  
the West;

Still upon the whole, the campaign of 378 seems to have opened auspiciously for the interests of Rome along the whole line. In the West, Gratian, who had found his barbarians upon the Rhine and in the Tyrol perceptibly more restless and excited on account of the rumours of Rome's reverses on the Danube, succeeded in winning an important victory near Colmar in Alsace, and in reducing to obedience, after some operations of extraordinary difficulty, the Lentienses, a barbarous tribe who dwelt among the mountains of the Black Forest.

in the East. In the East, Sebastian, who had been so lately an unconscious candidate for the purple of Valentinian, was summoned from Italy at the earnest request of Valens and assumed the supreme command of the infantry in the room of Trajan. With a small and select detachment of troops<sup>2</sup> he fell by night upon a large

<sup>1</sup> This, which must have been an important engagement, is only mentioned incidentally by Ammianus in his account of Julian's coronation. '*Maurus nomine quidam postea comes, qui rem male gessit apud Succorum angustias, Petulantium tunc hastatus*' (xx. 4. 18).

<sup>2</sup> Only 300 according to Ammianus: Zosimus, who is less likely to



body of marauding Goths who had settled themselves to sleep by the banks of the river Hebrus (*Maritza*), and only a few nimble-footed ones among them escaped the slaying sword of the Roman general.

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.  
378.

But these two victories were in fact not the precursors merely, but the causes, of a greater and far more terrible defeat. The Emperor Valens had now appeared upon the scene, having removed his court from Antioch to Constantinople. Deep down in that man's heart, the secret motive it may be believed of many of his worst and most unwise actions, was the conviction that he had been chosen by fraternal partiality for an office for which he was not fitted, and that all men, citizens, soldiers, generals, were ever reflecting upon that unfitness. The victory of his nephew, the gallant and brilliant Gratian, was gall and wormwood to his spirit, and he nourished a petulant and morbid craving for a triumph in which that nephew should have no share, and which Sebastian's success, somewhat magnified in the general's report of it, persuaded him would be an easy one.

Valens at  
Constantinople.

The few days of the Emperor's stay at Constantinople had been clouded by an outbreak of popular sedition, partial indeed, and soon suppressed, but unpleasantly indicating the adverse judgment of the multitude on his recent policy. Valens withdrew in displeasure to his villa of Melanthias (eighteen miles from the capital), where, since he knew himself to be unpopular with the citizens, he set himself to gain the affections of the soldiery by the well-worn devices of donative and

be accurate, says 2000: but both agree that they were most carefully selected soldiers.

BOOK I. extra rations, and affable gossip with the men<sup>1</sup>. In  
 CH. 4. this way the early summer passed on, while Sebastian  
 378. won his victory by the Maritza and Gratian his by the  
 Rhine. Roused by these tidings, Valens set forth from  
 his villa with a large and well-appointed army, contain-  
 ing no small number of veterans, and many experienced  
 officers, among them Trajan, the late Master of the  
 Soldiers. On his march an incident occurred, which at  
 the time was probably remarkable only as furnishing an  
 illustration of the lamentably devastated condition of the  
 country, but to which later generations added a touch  
 of the supernatural, and then beheld in it a portent.

Book iv,  
 ch. 21.

Portent  
 which ap-  
 peared to  
 the army  
 of Valens.

‘The body of a man,’ says Zosimus, ‘was seen lying  
 by the roadside, seeming as if it had been scourged  
 from head to foot, and utterly motionless, except as to  
 the eyes, which were open, and which it moved from  
 one to another of the beholders. To all questions who  
 he was, or whence he came, or from whom he had  
 suffered these things, he answered nothing. Whereupon  
 they deemed the sight to be somewhat in the nature  
 of a portent, and showed it to the Emperor. Still,  
 when he questioned it, it remained equally dumb: and  
 you would have said that it could not be living, since  
 the whole body was motionless, nor yet utterly dead  
 since it still had the power of vision. And while they  
 were gazing, suddenly the portentous thing vanished.  
 Whereupon those of the bystanders who had skill to  
 read coming events, conjectured that the apparition  
 foreshadowed the future condition of the commonwealth,  
 which, like that man, should be stricken and scourged,  
 and lie for a space like one who is about to give up the

<sup>1</sup> ‘*Militem stipendio fovebat et alimentis et blandâ crebritate sermonum*’ (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 11. 1).

ghost, until at length by the vileness of its rulers and ministers it should be utterly destroyed. And this forecast, as one after another all these things have come upon us, is seen to have been a true one.'

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.  
378.

After three days' march the army reached Hadrianople, where they took up their position in the usual square form of a Roman camp strengthened by ditch and vallum and palisade. The scouts who had seen the Gothic forces, by some incredible error brought back word that they only numbered 10,000 men<sup>1</sup>. Before the battle was joined, the Emperor must have been undeceived on this point, but it is probable that to the last he under-estimated the strength of his foe. While they were still in camp Richomer, the Count of the Domestics, arrived with a letter from his young master Gratian, who had been detained by fever at Sirmium, stating that he was again on the road, and would shortly join his uncle with powerful reinforcements. A council of war was held to decide between instant battle and a delay of a few days in order to effect a junction with Gratian. Sebastian, fresh from his easy victory by the Maritza, advised immediate action<sup>2</sup>. Victor, Master of the Cavalry, a Sarmatian

<sup>1</sup> It is not very easy to understand Ammianus' account of the movements of the Goths. He says that Fritigern, after Sebastian's victory by the Hebrus, gathered all his people together and marched at once to Cabyle (in the north-east corner of Thrace, between the Balkan and the Euxine), for the sake of food, and to be safe from another surprise by Sebastian (xxxi. 11. 5). The Imperial scouts reconnoitred the Gothic forces at Nicé, about 30 miles East of Hadrianople. Apparently, therefore, Fritigern, having resumed the offensive, had marched southward by the Marcianople road which, near Nicé, joins the road coming from Sophia and Hadrianople.

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus says that Sebastian advised Valens to avoid a pitched

BOOK I.  
CH. 4.

378.

Negotia-  
tions com-  
menced by  
the Goths.

(Sclavonian) by birth, but an excellent and wary general and true to Rome, advised delay. The absurd miscalculation of the enemy's forces, joined to the Emperor's unconcealed desire to win his victory without Gratian, carried the day, and it was decided to fight forthwith.

Scarcely had this resolution been arrived at when a singular embassy arrived from Fritigern. 'A presbyter of the Christian worship,' with other persons of somewhat humble rank<sup>1</sup>, brought a letter, in which the Gothic king entreated that he and his people who were driven forth from their homes by the inroad of the savage Huns, might have the province of Thrace<sup>2</sup> assigned to them for a habitation, with all the cattle and crops which yet remained in it. On this condition, which, as it may have been represented, was justified by the precedent of Aurelian's cession of Dacia, they promised to remain everlastingly at peace with Rome. According to a camp-rumour, which Ammianus believed, but which to a modern historian seems highly improbable, this same messenger brought confidential letters from the Goth to the Emperor, advising him apparently not to concede the terms openly asked for, but to hurry up his army close to the barbarian host, and thereby enable Fritigern to extract from his too arrogant followers terms more favourable to the Roman commonwealth.

battle with the Goths, but Ammianus, from whom I have taken the account given above, is a better authority.

<sup>1</sup> 'Christiani ritus presbyter, ut ipsi appellant, missus a Fritigerno legatus cum aliis humilibus venit ad principis castra' (Amm. Mar. xxxi. 12. 8).

<sup>2</sup> This would almost exactly correspond with the Western half of the modern province of Eastern Roumelia. A reference to the map will show that the Diocletianic province of Thrace was much smaller than the region generally known by that name.



Such an embassy, with such a request, especially in the existing mood of the Emperor and his officers, was of course disregarded : and at dawn of the following day the Emperor and his army set forward, leaving their baggage, military chest, and the chief of the trappings of the Imperial dignity, under the shelter of the walls of Hadrianople.

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CH. 4.  
378.  
Battle of  
Hadrian-  
ople, Aug.  
9, 378.

It was not till about two o'clock in the afternoon that the waggons of the Goths, arranged in their usual circular form, were seen upon the horizon. The Romans drew up their line of battle, putting the cavalry, contrary to their usual custom, in front of the heavy-armed infantry. While this was going on, the barbarians, 'according to their custom,' says Ammianus, 'raised a sad and savage howl,' which however was probably meant for melody. Then followed, not the fight, but a perplexing series of embassies and counter embassies between Fritigern and Valens. The Goth seems to have had really some doubt as to the issue of the combat. His Ostrogothic allies, Alatheus and Saphrax, with the chief of the barbarian cavalry, were from some unexplained cause absent, but he knew that they were hastening to join him. He knew also that with the Roman troops, hot, exhausted, and thirsty after a long march under the noon-day sun of August, and with their horses unable to graze—for the Goths had set the dry grass on fire and it was still blazing around them—an hour or two of delay would tell for him against the Emperor. Why Valens lingered is less easy to explain, unless, after all, he, though eager for a victory all his own, had little inclination for the fight.

The negotiations turned on the quality of the hostages who were to be exchanged in order that Fritigern



BOOK I. might be sufficiently secure of peace to impose it on his  
 CH. 4. followers. Aequitius, who held the high office of  
 378. 'Cura Palatii,' and was a relation of Valens, was  
 named : but Aequitius had before tasted the discomfort  
 of captivity among the Goths, and having escaped—  
 perhaps broken his parole, was not sure what kind of  
 welcome he would be met with by the barbarians. Then  
 Count Richomer nobly volunteered for the unpleasant  
 task, and had actually started for the waggon-encamp-  
 ment, but before he reached it the impatience of the  
 Roman soldiers put an end to this irritating suspense.  
 Some light-armed troops (archers and shield-bearers)  
 under the command of Bacurius the Armenian, came up  
 to the Gothic rampart and actually engaged the enemy  
 at the very moment when Richomer was starting on  
 his mission. Doubtless, however, even then Fritigern  
 would have found means to spin out again his inter-  
 minable negotiations, had not his chief end already been  
 attained. Alatheus and Saphrax were come, and their  
 cavalry swept down upon the hot and hungry Roman  
 soldiers 'like a thunderbolt.' The battle which followed  
 is described with much minuteness but no great clear-  
 ness by Ammianus. What the professional Roman  
 soldier has failed to make clear, a modern and unpro-  
 fessional writer may be excused from attempting to  
 explain. Something is said about the right wing of the  
 cavalry having reached the ground before the left,  
 which straggled up in disorder by various roads to the  
 field of battle. It has also been suggested<sup>1</sup> that the  
 Romans, in putting their cavalry before their infantry,  
 showed that they intended to attack, and that the  
 battle was necessarily lost when Fritigern by his crafty

<sup>1</sup> By Pallmann (i. 134).

negotiations and by the well-timed charge of Alatheus and Saphrax wrested from them the offensive. The left wing of the cavalry actually pushed up to the Gothic waggons, and had they been supported by their comrades, would perhaps have stormed the camp, but isolated as they were from the rest of the army, they were powerless. Far behind them the maniples of the infantry were so tightly jammed together that they could scarce draw their swords or reach back a once-extended hand, and their spears were broken by the swaying to and fro of their own unmanageable mass before they could hurl them against the enemy. There they stood, raging but helpless, an easy mark to the Gothic missiles, not one of which could fail to wound a Roman soldier, while the cavalry, which should have covered their advance, far forward on the battle-field, but separated from the main body of the army by an intervening sea of furious barbarians, stood for some time a brave but broken bulwark. At length, after hours of slaughter and after some hopeless charges over the heaps of slain, in which the Romans tried to get at the enemy with their swords and to avenge the destruction which they could not avert, the ranks of the infantry gave way and they fled in confusion from the field.

Where meanwhile was Valens? When the day was irretrievably lost, finding himself surrounded on all sides by scenes of horror, he rode, leaping with difficulty over heaps of slain, to where two legions of his guard<sup>1</sup> still held their ground against the surging

<sup>1</sup> The *Lancearii* and *Mattiarii*, both of which bodies of troops, named from the weapons which they employed, are mentioned in the *Notitia Orientis* (cap. iv) among the six *Legiones Palatinae*. The

BOOK I. torrent of the barbarians. Trajan, who was with them,  
 CH. 4. shouted out, 'All hope is gone unless a detachment of  
 378. soldiers can be got together to protect the Emperor's  
 person.' At these words a certain Count Victor<sup>1</sup> rode  
 off to collect some of the Batavian cohort, whose duty  
 it was to act as a reserve to the Imperial Guard. But  
 when he reached their station he found not a man  
 there, and evidently deeming further efforts to save his  
 master's life hopeless, he and Richomer and Saturninus  
 hurried from the field.

Death of  
 Valens.

Trajan fell where he was fighting, and round him fell  
 presumably the two still unbroken legions, while the  
 miserable Valens wandered on between heaps of slain  
 horses and over roads made nearly impassable by his  
 dead and dying subjects. Night came on, a moonless  
 night, and, when the dreadful day dawned, the Emperor  
 was not to be found. Some said that they had seen  
 him at twilight flying from the field, in the crowd  
 of common soldiers, sore wounded by an arrow, and  
 that he had suddenly fallen, faint from the loss of  
 blood. Others told a more circumstantial tale. Ac-  
 cording to them, after he had received his wound, a  
 small company of eunuchs and soldiers of the body-  
 guard who still surrounded him, bore him off to some  
 miserable out-house of timber, which they saw nigh at  
 hand. There, while they were trying to assuage his  
 pain, a company of Goths came by, ignorant whom they  
 were pursuing, and demanded admission. As the door  
 was kept tightly barred against them, and they were  
 assailed by a shower of arrows from the roof, the bar-

*Batavi Seniores* mentioned in the next sentence, head the list of the  
 eighteen *Auxilia Palatina*.

<sup>1</sup> Not the Master of the Cavalry mentioned p. 269.

barians, impatient at being so long hindered from their work of depredation, piled straw and logs against the cottage and set it on fire. One young guardsman alone escaped from the conflagration to tell the Goths what they had done, and of how great a prize they had defrauded themselves by their cruel impatience.

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CH. 4.  
378.

This last version of the story, though only half credited by Ammianus, is the one which obtained most currency with posterity. The ecclesiastical historians, in whose eyes the heresy of Valens was his greatest crime, were never tired of remarking that he who, by seducing the Gothic nation into Arianism, had caused so many of their number to burn eternally in hell, was himself, according to the righteous retribution of God, burned on earth by the hands of those same barbarians.

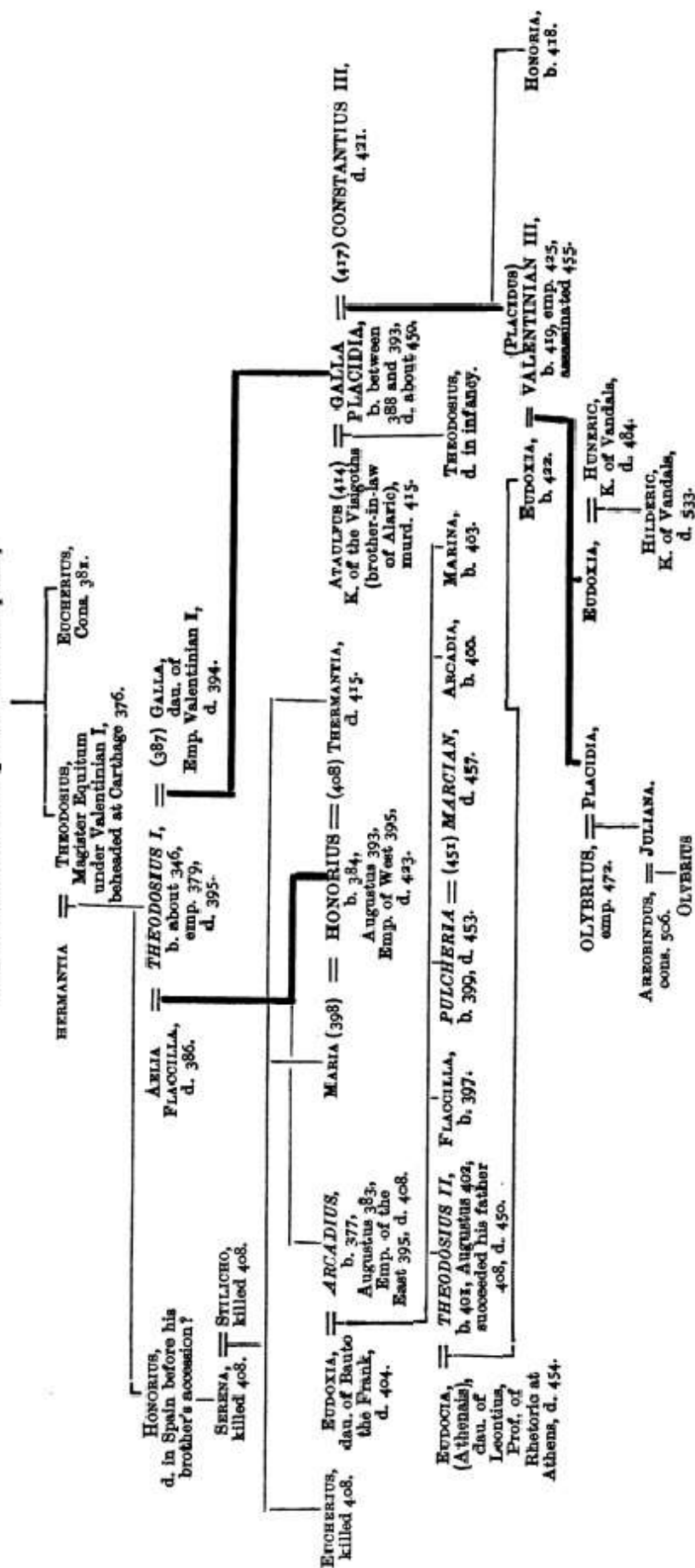
Upon the field of Hadrianople fully two-thirds of the Roman army were proved to have perished. Among them were thirty-seven officers of high rank, besides Trajan and Sebastian. 'Though the Romans,' says xxxi. 13.19. Ammianus, 'have often had experience of the fickleness of Fortune, their annals contain no record of so destructive a defeat since the battle of Cannae.' And we, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, can perceive that while even the terrible disaster of Cannae was reparable, the consequences of the battle of Hadrianople could never be repaired<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> After the battle of Hadrianople had been fought and the enemy had departed, it is said that a stone sepulchre was discovered on the plain with the name of a nobleman called Mimas carved upon it in Greek letters. Then was remembered the oracle repeated by the victims in the affair of Theodorus (p. 241) prophesying that they should be avenged—

*Ἐν πεδίοισι Μίμαντος ἀγαιόμενον Ἄρης.*

# FAMILY OF THEODOSIUS.

(From the table in Clinton's *Fasti Romani*.)  
[Emperors of the East are printed in *Italic capitals*.]









*For the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.*

EMPERORS OF THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

THEODOSIUS I. - THEODOSIUS II.





## CHAPTER V.

### THEODOSIUS AND THE FOEDERATI.

#### Authorities.

##### Sources :—

AMMIANUS serves us for five months after the battle of Hadrianople. Then, with the accession of Theodosius, we lose his guidance, and the 'younger and more learned' successor, whose advent he looked forward to as the historian of the reign of Theodosius, unfortunately for us never appeared.

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

Our chief *heathen* authority for the reign of Theodosius is ZOSIMUS (described at the beginning of the previous chapter), who is more than usually confused and inconsecutive in his account of the events of this reign. We possess, however, a few interesting fragments of the writer upon whose history that of Zosimus was probably in great part founded.

EUNAPIUS, like Zosimus, a heathen, and very bitter against both Constantine and Theodosius.

He was born at Sardis, about 347, and was educated by his kinsman Chrysanthius, the sophist, whom Julian made high-priest of Lydia. In 362 he went to Athens in order to attend the lectures of the aged Proaeresius, who was at that time reputed the greatest of the Sophists. After four years of study he was initiated into the secret theurgic doctrines of Iamblichus. At the same time probably he was also initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, and the Hierophant who performed the rite, informed him confidentially that the complete overthrow of the old religion and the ruin of Greece were near at hand. On his return to Lydia he became a professed teacher of rhetoric. He wrote both *The Lives of Philosophers and Sophists*, and also *A History* in continuation of Dexippus. The latter consisted of fourteen books, embracing the period from the death of



BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

Claudius Gothicus, 270, to the banishment of St. Chrysostom, 404. He himself gives us some interesting details concerning the motives which urged him to authorship. 'Now,' he says, at the commencement of his second book, 'having reached the period of Julian, my story has brought me to that which was ever my chief aim in writing. Now shall I be concerned with the actions of one whom I regard with somewhat of a lover's enthusiasm. Not, by Jove, that I ever saw him or received any benefit at his hands, for I who write these lines was but a boy when he reigned. But a wonderful and irresistible incentive to love was the universal feeling of admiration which he excited, and the untarnished brilliance of his glory. For how could I be silent, when none around me were silent, about the actions of Julian? How refrain from speaking when even men unskilled in speech loved to linger over the sweet and golden theme of his praises?' And then Eunapius goes on to describe how his associates, chief among them a Professor of Medicine named Oribasius, who had himself been a faithful friend and counsellor of Julian, seeing his literary skill, urged him to compose the history of the Emperor's exploits, saying that it would be stark impiety if he refrained from doing so.

We owe to Eunapius, scanty as are the fragments of his work that have been preserved (only 77 pages, all told, in the Bonn edition of the Byzantine historians), many interesting sketches of men and manners, and some curious anecdotes of classical times; as, for instance, that Philip of Macedon, having slipped and fallen on the arena, when he saw the measure of his body in the dust, said, half laughing at himself, 'How little ground is covered by a man who hankers after the whole world.' Again, that Marius said of Sulla, 'He is a lion and a fox joined together, but I fear the fox most.' And again, the fact which has been already referred to, that Julian said, when the war with Persia was coming to a head, and no one else dreamed of trouble from any other quarter, '*The Goths are quiet just now, but perhaps they will not always be quiet.*' A few of the most striking features in the ordinary description of the assemblage of the fugitive Goths on the Danubian frontier of the Empire are also borrowed from Eunapius.

Excerpt 19, pp. 69-71. In one passage the quiet page of the decorous Bonn edition of the Byzantine historians seems suddenly to flame into passion,

and we hear the shrill theological wrath of the unknown scribe who has been dead for a thousand years. Eunapius, in his account of the feelings of the army after the death of Julian, says that the common soldiers knew right well that they should never again find such a general, not even if a god took shape and came to lead them. 'A man who, by his own inherent nobility of nature and by something akin to God within him, arrested the till then irresistible downward tendency of the State. A man who, emerging from such waves of adversity, looked upon the sky and saw its hidden loveliness. A man who, while still clothed with a body, communed with the disembodied gods: who accepted sovereignty not because he loved it, but because he saw men in need of a ruler: who made himself beloved by his soldiers, not because he cared for popular applause, but because he knew that by doing so he should promote the welfare of all.'

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CH. 5.

Then, in a parenthesis, with a shriek that is all but audible, bursts in an outraged Christian copyist: 'Dost thou dare to insult us with such nonsense, thunder-maddened and fatuous chatterer? "Disembodied gods!" Whence stole you those words but from the Christian mysteries? Was Ganymede caught aloft by the eagle at the bidding of a disembodied god? Is Juno sister and wife of such an one? Were they disembodied gods for whom Hebe poured the nectar, and who in their drunkenness bandied their unseemly jests over the fall of Troy? It was not in order to reform the life of men that Julian chose empire, for he reformed nothing. He acted at first from base vanity and ingratitude to Constantius his benefactor, and then he was driven on by the demons to whom he offered sacrifice, that he might meet with the fitting reward of his folly and his crime.'

Against this angry interpolation yet another amanuensis has written his note in the margin, 'An invective against Eunapius' (στηλιτευτικὸς κατὰ Εὐναπίου). Eunapius must have been still writing his history in the sixty-eighth year of his age, or later, as he alludes therein to the sale of public offices under Pulcheria who was not declared Augusta till 414. But (as before said) his work, probably interrupted by his death, did not reach to a later period than 404. In the Prooemium to his History Eunapius indulges in some very dangerous reflections

BOOK I. on the comparative unimportance of chronological accuracy.  
 CH. 5. Minute calculations of days and weeks, says he in his lordly way, may do for a rich man's steward, but not for a historian.

To set against the heathen estimates of the character of Theodosius, we have pretty copious notes of his reign in *The Ecclesiastical Historians*:—

SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS (about 379–450).

His history covers the period from 306 to 439.

SOZOMEN (contemporary with Socrates).

His history covers the period from 323 to 425.

THEODORET (about 393–457).

His history covers the period from 320 to 429.

PHILOSTORGIUS, born about 364, died after 425.

His history covers the period from 300 to 425.

These historians are too well known to need any special description. It is sufficient to observe that for the period for which we shall require their aid they may be considered as practically contemporary authorities. Though writing histories of the Church they are not all Churchmen. Socrates and Sozomen were barristers at Constantinople. We do not appear to be informed as to the occupation of Philostorgius, but he was a bitter Arian, and loses no opportunity of decrying the orthodox champions. Theodoret was a Syrian bishop. A question here arises, how far these historians, so nearly contemporary and traversing almost precisely the same ground, are independent of one another. On the whole it seems most probable that Sozomen was acquainted with, and freely used the work of Socrates, though he never acknowledges any obligation to him. Theodoret and Philostorgius are probably independent authorities.

There are no doubt degrees of merit in these four histories; but they are all of them disappointing works to a modern student, dwelling at tedious length on mere theological squabbles, and giving little insight, comparatively, into the inner life of men or the causes of the transcendently important events in civil history which were proceeding in their day.

Though a heathen, THEMISTIUS, as has been already said, was favoured by Theodosius, and repays him with unqualified praise.

Another favourable, perhaps Christian, authority for the life of Theodosius is PACATUS (Latinus Pacatus Drepanius), a native of Bordeaux, who pronounced a panegyric on the Emperor at Rome, 389, after his victory over Maximus. The praise is of the fulsome and tasteless kind usual in these official panegyrics, and, where the oration deals with qualities, it can hardly be considered as furnishing any trustworthy materials for history. Actions (the chief of these being Theodosius' suppression of the tyranny of Maximus) may perhaps be more safely described from this source, as complete falsification of these would have been more difficult.

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CH. 5.

*Guide:—*

The monograph on 'Der Kaiser Theodosius der Grosse' by Dr. A. Guldenpenning and Dr. J. Ifland (Halle, 1878) is a careful and scholar-like work, and I have derived much assistance from it in preparing this edition.

THE course of events in the provinces south of the Danube during the year 378 was an illustration of the fact, abundantly proved by many other passages in the history of the world, that a barbarous race fighting against a civilised one may win victories, but scarcely ever knows how to improve them. Such a calamity as that of Hadrianople, had the king of Persia been the antagonist, must surely have involved the ruin at any rate of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire. In the hands of the Goths its direct results were ridiculously small—a little more ravaging and slaughtering, two or three years of desultory war, and then a treaty by which the barbarians bound themselves to be the humble servants of the Emperor.

With the dawn which followed the terrible night of the 9th of August, the victors, excited and greedy of spoil, marched in compact order to Hadrianople, where, as they knew from the reports of deserters, were to be found the insignia of the Imperial dignity and a great

The Goths  
march on  
Hadrian-  
ople.



BOOK I. accumulation of treasure. At first it seemed not im-  
CH. 5.

378.

possible that they might carry the place by a *coup de main*. Fugitives from the beaten army, soldiers and camp-followers, were still swarming around the gates and blocking up the road, by their disorderly eagerness preventing themselves from obtaining an entrance. With these men the Gothic squadrons kept up a fierce fight till about three in the afternoon. Then three hundred of the Roman infantry—possibly themselves enlisted from among the Teutonic subjects of the Empire—went over in a body to the barbarians. With incredible folly as well as cruelty the Goths refused to accept their surrender, and killed the greater part of them, thereby shutting out all propositions of a similar kind during the remainder of the war. Meanwhile the defenders of the city had succeeded in firmly closing the gates, had stationed powerful catapults and balistae on the walls, and finding themselves well supplied with all things necessary for a long defence, except a good stock of water, as the first day wore away to its close leaving the city still no nearer to its capture, their spirits began to rise, and the hope that all might yet be retrieved grew brighter.

But fail to  
take it.

Contrary to the advice of Fritigern, whose authority, though he bore the name of king, was evidently not absolute over followers hungering for booty, the Goths resolved to continue the siege, but, dismayed by the sight of so many of their bravest warriors slain or disabled, they determined to employ stratagem. Not all, apparently, of the deserters of the previous day had been slain by the Gothic sword. Some of the late Emperor's own guard of honour, conspicuous by their white tunics, as English guardsmen by their bear-skin



caps, and known throughout the Empire as *candidati*, had been admitted to surrender by the barbarians, and were now to be employed in the fresh attempt upon Hadrianople. They agreed to feign flight from their new friends and, when received within the gates, to set the city secretly on fire. In the bewilderment and confusion of the fire it was hoped that the walls would be stripped of their defenders, and that the Goths might rush in to an easy victory. The *Candidati* appear to have been true in their treachery. They stood in the fosse before the walls and stretched out suppliant hands entreating for admission. A suspicious diversity, however, in their statements respecting the plans of the Goths, caused them when admitted to be kept close prisoners, and when torture was applied they confessed the scheme in which they had made themselves accomplices.

The Gothic stratagem having thus miscarried, there was nothing for it but to try another open assault. Again the bravest and noblest of the barbarians pressed on at the head of their people, each one hoping that his should be the fortunate hand which should grasp the treasure of Valens. Again the engines on the walls played with fearful havoc upon the dense masses of the besiegers. The cylinders and capitals of stately columns came crashing down upon their heads. One gigantic engine, called the Wild Ass, hurled a mass of stone so vast that though it chanced to fall harmlessly upon a space of ground which was clear of the hostile ranks, all who fought by that part of the wall were demoralised by fear of what the next bray from the Wild Ass might signify. At length, after a long weary day of unsuccessful battle, when the assault of the besiegers

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

378.

BOOK I. had degenerated into a series of ill-organised rushes  
 CH. 5. against the walls, brave but utterly hopeless, their  
 378. trumpets were sadly sounded for retreat, and every survivor in the host said, 'Would that we had followed the counsel of Fritigern.' They drew off their forces. Hadrianople was saved, and its defenders, a larger host than was needed for its protection, withdrew by devious ways, some to Philippopolis and some to Sardica. They still hoped to find Valens somewhere hidden in the ravaged country, and they probably bore with them his treasure and his crown.

The Goths  
 repulsed  
 from be-  
 fore Con-  
 stantin-  
 ople.

The Goths meanwhile, with many of their new allies, the Huns and the Alani, in their ranks, after an unsuccessful attempt upon Perinthus by the Sea of Marmora, marched upon Constantinople. Destitute as they were of all naval resources, it must surely have been but a forlorn hope for men who had failed in the moment of victory to take the inland city of Hadrianople, to attempt the strongly fortified peninsula of Byzantium. At any rate their attack was repulsed, and that partly by the patriotic exertions of Dominica, widow of Valens, who paid the troops and organised the work of defence<sup>1</sup>, and partly by the rough energy of a race whom after ages would have wondered to behold among the defenders of Christian Constantinople. A band of Saracens, the wild and wandering inhabitants of Arabia, who had been converted to some external semblance of Christianity, had been sent by their queen Mavia as auxiliaries to Valens<sup>2</sup>, and upon them now fell the chief labour of its defence. With barbarian confidence and impetuosity they issued forth from the gates and fell upon the squadrons of the

<sup>1</sup> Sozomen, vii. 1.    <sup>2</sup> Eunapius, p. 52 (ed. Bonn); Sozomen, l.c.

Goths. At first the event of the battle seemed doubtful, but at length the Teutonic host became demoralised and retired in disorder. According to Ammianus<sup>1</sup>, the determining cause of their defeat was the horror inspired by the ghastly proceedings of one of the Saracen warriors. Completely naked except for a girdle round his loins, with that long floating black hair which Europe afterwards knew so well, uttering a hoarse and melancholy howl, he sprang with drawn dagger upon the Gothic hosts, and having stabbed his man proceeded to suck the life-blood from the neck of his slaughtered foe. The Northern barbarians, easily accessible to shadowy and superstitious terrors, and arguing perhaps that they had to do with demons rather than with men, began to waver in their ranks, and withdrew from the field. Who that witnessed that confused jostle between the Northern and Southern barbarisms could have imagined the part that each was destined to play in the Middle Ages beside the Mediterranean shores; that they would meet again three centuries later upon the Andalusian plain; that from these would spring the stately Khalifats of Cordova and Bagdad; from those the chivalry of Castille?

The Gothic army, with heavy losses and somewhat impaired hope, retired from Constantinople. Since they could take no important city, it was clear that they could not yet conquer, if they wished to conquer, the Empire of Rome. They could ravage it however, and this they did effectually, wandering almost at pleasure over the countries that we now call Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, and up to the very spurs of the Julian Alps on the north-eastern confines of Italy. Incapable of resist-

<sup>1</sup> xxxi. 16. 7.

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.  
378.

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

379-  
Murder  
of the  
hostages.

ance except behind walls, the Romans took a cruel and cowardly revenge. It will be remembered that when the Goths were ferried across the Danube they had been compelled to surrender all the youthful sons of their chief men as hostages for their good behaviour. These lads had been dispersed through the cities of the East, where their rich attire and the stately forms which seemed to tell of the temperate northern climates in which they had their birth, excited the admiration and fear of the populations among whom they were placed<sup>1</sup>. Three years had now passed since the fatal treaty, and these youths were rapidly maturing into men. The brave deeds, the victories and defeats of their fathers on the Thracian battle-fields, had reached their ears. Clustering together in the unfriendly streets they muttered to one another—so at least the Romans thought—in their barbaric tongue, counsels of revenge for their slain kinsmen. Julius, the Master of the Soldiery, to whom tidings were brought of this real or supposed movement among the hostages, determined to strike the first blow. Having obtained full powers from the Senate at Constantinople, and communicated his plans under pledges of inviolable secrecy to the commandants of the garrisons, he circulated through the provinces a report that all the hostages who should present themselves at the chief cities on a given day would receive rich gifts and an allotment of lands from the bounty of the Emperor. Laying aside all thoughts of vengeance, if they had ever entertained them, the Gothic lads trooped in, each one, to the capital of his province. When they were thus assembled, unarmed

<sup>1</sup> Eunapius, p. 50 : *παῖδες δὲ αὐτῶν πρὸς τε τὴν εὐκрасίαν τῶν ἀέρων ἀνέδραμον καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἤβησαν.*



and unsuspecting, in the Thracian and Asiatic market-places, the soldiery at a given signal mounted the roofs of the surrounding houses, and hurled stones and darts upon them till the last of the yellow-haired striplings was laid low. A brave deed truly, and one worthy of the Roman legions in those days, and of the Master of the Soldiery—bearing alas, the great name of Julius—who commanded them! It is with sorrow that we observe that Ammianus Marcellinus, who closes his history with this event, speaks with approbation of the ‘prudent counsel of the Master, the accomplishment whereof without tumult or delay saved the Eastern provinces from a great danger.’

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379.

This dastardly crime seems to have been committed on the authority of the Senate only, during the interval of five months which intervened between the death of Valens and the elevation of his successor to the Eastern Throne<sup>1</sup>. To him, to the well-known figure of the Emperor *Theodosius*, it is now time to turn. He inherited from his father a name ennobled by great services to the state, and shaded by the remembrance of a cruel wrong. Of all the generals who served the house of Valentinian none had earned a higher or purer fame than that father, Theodosius the Spaniard.

His birthplace was probably the same as that of his Imperial son, namely, the little town of Cauca (now Coca), situated near the confines of Old Castille and Leon, on the upper waters of the Douro, twenty-nine miles from the city of Segovia<sup>2</sup>. He was of illustrious birth,

Services of  
the elder  
Theodo-  
sius.

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont truly observes that the authority of Ammianus is to be preferred to that of Zosimus (iv. 26) who puts the massacre after the accession of Theodosius.

<sup>2</sup> Both Zosimus (iv. 24) and Idatius (*Chronicon*, s. a. 379) make



BOOK I. sprung from one of those powerful provincial families  
 CH. 5. which now formed the true aristocracy of the Empire. We are not informed of the year of his birth (which was probably about 320), nor of the earlier steps in his upward career. We first hear of him in Britain, and as three of the Camps<sup>1</sup> on the line of the Roman Wall in Northumberland were garrisoned by detachments of cavalry and infantry from the north-west of Spain<sup>2</sup>, it is possible that Theodosius the Elder may have learnt the rudiments of war in defending that bleak barrier. This, however, is merely a conjecture. Our first authentic information concerning him brings him before us not as a Tribune or Prefect, but as holding the high military office of Duke of Britain<sup>3</sup>. In the year 368 tidings had been brought to Valentinian of the melancholy state of our island. The Franks and the Saxons were harassing the eastern coast with their pillagings, burnings, and murderings. On the northern border of the province the Picts, the Emperor Theodosius a native 'of the province of Gallicia and the city of Cauca.' The Cauca above described was not in the province of Gallicia, but some sixty or seventy miles to the south-east of its nearest point. As this was Idatius' own country it is unsatisfactory to have to impute inaccuracy to him on a subject with which he must have been well acquainted, and I am disposed to conjecture that there may have been another, Gallician Cauca, of which, however, I find no trace. The assignment of Italica (near Seville) as the birthplace of Theodosius, for which Marcellinus Comes is responsible, has evidently arisen from the desire to make him a fellow-townsmen with Trajan.

<sup>1</sup> Condercum (Benwell), Cilurnum (Chollerford) and Aesica (Great Chesters).

<sup>2</sup> See *Notitia Occidentis*, cap. xl: 'Sub dispositioni viri spectabilis ducis Britanniarum . . . per lineam valli . . . Praefectus alae primae Asturum Conderco . . . Praefectus alae secundae Asturum Cilurno . . . Tribunus cohortis primae Asturum Aesica.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Dux Britanniarum.' We may fairly infer from Ammianus, xxviii. 3. 1, that this was his title.

divided into two branches, the Dicalydones and Verturiones, the warlike nation of the Attacotti and the wide-wandering Scots, were marching up and down whither they would, carrying desolation with them. The Count of the Saxon shore was slain, the Duke of Britain (the predecessor of Theodosius) was apparently a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. The Emperor chose Theodosius who had already earned a high military reputation, and sent him with a selected body of young legionaries, proud to serve under such a commander, to deliver Britain from the spoiler.

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368.

Theodosius landed at Richborough, and went first to a city which in old times used to be called *Lundinium*, but which the moderns—that is to say, the moderns of the fourth century—persisted in calling *Augusta*. Making this city his basis of operations, but avoiding any great pitched battle, he divided his forces into small but nimble detachments, whose business it was to intercept the plundering hordes, to fall upon them when encumbered with spoil, and thus to pillage the pillagers, and slay the slayers. In this way he gradually cleared the country of its invaders, and recovered the greater part of the booty which they had taken and which, except a small portion reserved as a reward for his weary soldiers, was all returned to the provincials<sup>1</sup>. In the words of Claudian, the court-poet of the Theodosian family,

‘What did the stars avail, the seas unknown,  
The frost eternal of that frigid zone?  
The Saxons’ life-stream steeped the Orcadian plain,  
Thulé with blood of Picts grew warm again,  
And icy Erin<sup>2</sup> mourned her Scotsmen slain<sup>3</sup>.’

<sup>1</sup> *Amm. Mar.* xxvii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> ‘*Glacialis Ierne*.’

<sup>3</sup> Claudian *de IV Cons. Honorii*, 30–34.

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368.

The result of the campaign of Theodosius was that the wanton insolence of the various barbarian tribes who thought to find the British province an easy prey was checked, the ruined cities and camps were rebuilt, and the foundations of what promised to be a long peace—it lasted, in fact, for something like forty years—seemed to be securely laid<sup>1</sup>. In his civil administration of the province, Theodosius showed himself equally successful, detecting and repressing a dangerous conspiracy<sup>2</sup>, and effecting a reformation in the corps of *Areani*<sup>3</sup>, who having been originally organised as a kind of secret intelligence department to gain information of the movements of the enemy, had been largely engaged in underhand trade with the bands of the spoilers, virtually becoming receivers of stolen goods, and far more often revealing the movements of the legions to the barbarians than those of the barbarians to the Roman officers.

In the following year (369) Theodosius, now Master of the Cavalry, led an army through the Grisons to a successful attack upon the Alamanni, many of whom he slew, while the remainder were transported to the north of Italy, where they cultivated the fruitful plains watered by the Po, as tributaries of the Empire.

<sup>1</sup> 'Fusis variis gentibus et fugatis, quas insolentia nutriente securitate adgredi Romanas res inflammabat, in integrum restituit civitates et castra multiplicibus quidem damnis adflicta, sed ad quietem temporis longi fundata' (Amm. Mar. xxviii. 3. 2). A very interesting passage, as throwing light on the state of our island towards the close of the fourth century.

<sup>2</sup> That of Valentinus, brother of the Praetorian Prefect Maximin, whose tyranny Ammianus describes at great length (xxix. 3, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> Amm. Mar. xxviii. 3. 8. I can find no trace of these *Areani* elsewhere. There seems to be no variation in the MSS., but is not *Areani* an error for *Arcani*?

His greatest services to the State, however, were rendered in the province of Africa, where he spent the last three years of his life (373-376). During the cruelly oppressive government of Count Romanus, a Moorish chieftain named Firmus, the lord of a large tract of country, had openly revolted against Valentinian and assumed the purple. The Emperor naturally turned to Theodosius, the most distinguished of his generals, the man who then occupied the same place in the minds of men which Corbulo had filled in the reign of Nero, and sent him with the dignity of Count of Africa, to suppress the Moorish revolt. A difficult but victorious campaign was ended by the suicide of Firmus, and Theodosius remained to govern, equitably and wisely, the province which his arms had saved from the barbarian. 'Africa,' wrote the orator Symmachus to him<sup>1</sup>, 'has recovered from her disease, and though our invincible Emperors were her physicians, you were the remedy which they applied. Your true palm-wreath is the happiness of the province.'

To a life distinguished by such eminent services to the state, if not the Imperial diadem, at least an old age of dignified repose would have seemed the fitting crown. But an unexpected change in his fortunes was at hand. In the year 376, a few months probably after the sudden death of the Emperor Valentinian, a scaffold was erected at Carthage, and Theodosius was ordered to ascend it. 'He asked,' we are told<sup>2</sup>, 'that he might first be baptized for the remission of his sins, and having obtained the sacrament of

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

373-376

How repaid.

<sup>1</sup> Epist. x. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Orosius, vii. 33. It is very extraordinary that we have no mention in Ammianus of the death of Theodosius the elder.



BOOK I. Christ, which he had desired, after a glorious life in  
CH. 5.

376.

this world, being also secure of the life eternal, he willingly offered his neck to the executioner.' History asks in vain for the motive of such well-nigh unexampled ingratitude. The only one that is assigned is 'creeping envy' of the fame of the old general<sup>1</sup>. It is possible that the party of the late governor Romanus, scotched but not killed by that oppressor's removal from office, may have found means to calumniate him successfully at the Court of Milan<sup>2</sup>. Possibly too his adhesion to the orthodox creed may have rendered him obnoxious to Justina, widow of Valentinian, who governed Africa as well as Italy in the name of her infant son, and whom we know to have been a bitter Arian. But it is probable that the hand which prepared, and the voice which counselled the stroke, were the hand and the voice of Valens, the most powerful member for the time of the Imperial partnership. Those four ominous letters Θ Ε Ο Δ began the name of Theodosius as surely as that of Theodorus, and it seems therefore allowable to suppose that the incantation scene at Antioch four years previously—the laurel tripod, the person in linen mantle and with linen socks, who shook the magic cauldron and made the ring dance up and down among the twenty-four letters of the alphabet—were links in the

<sup>1</sup> 'Instimulante et obrepente invidiâ ;' Orosius, l.c.

<sup>2</sup> Richter (*Weströmisches Reich*, pp. 401-2) attributes the death of Theodosius to Merobaudes, and thinks it was decreed because he did not belong to the clique of Gratian's friends. But there does not seem to be any testimony in support of this charge, and it is to be remembered that Africa was under Justina and her son, not directly under Gratian.



chain of causation which led the blameless veteran to his doom.

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Such, briefly sketched, was the career of the elder Theodosius. His son and namesake, born in Spain about the year 346, was like him, a man of noble and commanding presence, affable in his demeanour<sup>1</sup>, but of slender literary attainments<sup>2</sup>, as might naturally be expected in one who had been 'a man of war from his youth.' He certainly had the power of inspiring enthusiastic loyalty in his soldiers, and terror in his enemies. From the hints both of friends and foes we may perhaps conjecture that his large handsome countenance in the earlier years of his reign wore an expression which the former called good-tempered, the latter heavy and indolent; but that after some years of despotic power, the scowl on the brow grew darker and the angry flush on the cheek more often visible<sup>3</sup>.

Career of  
Theodosius  
Junior.

Having learned the elements of the military art under his father, doubtless in Britain, Germany and Africa, he had shown such evidences of good soldiership that already in the year 373 he filled the high office of Duke of Moesia<sup>4</sup>. In this capacity he won several victories over the 'Free Sarmatians,' and by the terror of his name checked the torrent of barbarian invasion which was overflowing Pannonia. On the death of his father (376) he retired into private life, lived among

<sup>1</sup> Themistius, Or. xv. p. 190 (ed. Paris).

<sup>2</sup> Aurelius Victor, Epitome xlviii.

<sup>3</sup> Pacatus and Themistius suggest the idea of *bonhomie*; Zosimus of indolence; Claudian (Laus Serenae, 135-8) that of passionateness.

<sup>4</sup> 'Dux Moesiae Theodosius Junior, primâ etiam tum lanugine juvenis' says Ammianus (xxix. 6. 15). He was probably then in his twenty-seventh year.

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his own people on his Spanish estate, and—so says his panegyrist<sup>1</sup>—often encouraged his peasants by taking a turn with them in the labours of the farm, so that his martial limbs might not grow flabby by disuse. His retirement lasted less than three years. Then Gratian, finding himself, at the age of twenty, left by the death of his uncle Valens, the oldest of the Emperors, with only his impetuous and unwise step-mother Justina nominally assisting in the administration of the Empire, looked around him for help, and wisely determined by one act to associate with himself a colleague of riper experience than his own, and to repair, as far as it could be repaired, the cruel injustice which had been committed by the house of Valentinian. He summoned Theodosius from Spain, and on the 19th of January, 379, proclaimed him Augustus at Sirmium on the Save. The new Emperor was probably in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

His accession Jan.  
19, 379.

Division  
of the  
Empire.

To his new colleague Gratian assigned the share of the Empire which had formerly been governed by Valens, but with considerably enlarged limits. It had doubtless been perceived in the recent campaign that the division between *Oriens* and *Illyricum* which split what is now called 'the Balkan peninsula' into two unequal parts, by a line running north and south from the Danube to the Aegean<sup>2</sup>, was ill adapted for purposes of defence against the Gothic invaders. Now, therefore, Gratian handed over to Theodosius not only *Oriens*

<sup>1</sup> Pacatus, Panegyricus ix.

<sup>2</sup> This line pretty nearly corresponded with the twenty-fourth parallel of longitude, running first a degree to the west and then a degree to the east of it, almost passing through Sardica (the modern Sofia) and coming out opposite to the island of Thasos.

(that is Moesia and Thrace, with Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt) but also the eastern part of Illyricum, comprising the two 'Dioceses' of Dacia and Macedonia, or, speaking in terms of modern geography, Servia, Macedonia, Albania and Greece. Nearly the whole of that territory which recently belonged to Turkey, except Moldavia and Wallachia, thus became subject to the sway of the Eastern Emperor. This arrangement undoubtedly worked well for the defence of the provinces, now consolidated under the rule of Theodosius: and it had important bearings on the after-history of Europe, as the line now traced was practically the abiding frontier between the Eastern and Western Empires<sup>1</sup>.

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From Sirmium, the scene of his accession, the new Emperor of the East seems to have marched up the valley of the Morava, and down the valley of the Vardar to Thessalonica, which he made his headquarters for the two following years. It is not difficult to discern the reason for his choice. All over the plains of Thrace and Macedonia, on the south of the Balkan range as well as on the north of it, the Gothic marauders were swarming. The walled cities, it is true, everywhere repelled their attacks, but in the open country they were irresistible. Far and wide the burning villas, the ravaged vineyards, the long trains of captives, in which the nobleman as well as the *colonus* was led off into miserable bondage, told the tale of the ruin wrought by the terrible day of Hadrianople. The

First campaign of Theodosius.

<sup>1</sup> The important fact of this new division is disclosed to us only by a sentence in the Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen (vii. 4), 'Gratian bestowed the government of *Illyria* and of the eastern provinces upon Theodosius.' Tillemont has successfully vindicated the general accuracy of this statement against the attacks of M. Godefroy (v. 716).

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first duty of Theodosius manifestly was to clear the provinces south of the Balkan range, and when that was accomplished it would be time enough to consider how to deal with the Gothic settlers in Moesia. Till this was done the new Emperor would not even enter his capital. The right place for commencing the work was Thessalonica, with its strong situation on the Aegean, commanding the passes into Thessaly, and the shortest line of communication with Gratian's Illyrian capital, Sirmium.

Theodosius  
at Thes-  
salonica.

Thessalonica itself had been only lately hard pressed by the Gothic marauders, but a pestilence had broken out in their host which the Christians within the walls attributed to the prayers of their great bishop Acholius<sup>1</sup>, who thus like another Elisha scattered by spiritual weapons the host of the invaders<sup>2</sup>; and thus, probably before the spring of 379, the neighbourhood was cleared of their unwelcome presence. Here then, in this old Macedonian city, Theodosius fixed his camp and court, and hither streamed all the high dignitaries of the State, the officers of the army, the Senators of Constantinople, the members of the great Civil Service of the Empire, zealous to pay court to their new sovereign, and keen to receive promotion from his hands. The language, even of a hostile historian like Zosimus<sup>3</sup>, shows the favourable impression which the new Emperor made upon his subjects. Instead of the jealous, suspicious, timid Valens, here

<sup>1</sup> Or Ascholius. Contemporary writers seem to prefer the form in the text.

<sup>2</sup> This supposed supernatural intervention is mentioned by St. Ambrose—writing after the death of Acholius—in letter 15 (Class I). I owe this reference to Dr. Ifland (*Theodosius der Grosse*, p. 67).

<sup>3</sup> iv. 25.



was a frank, genial soldier, of florid face and sanguine temperament, affable to all who wished to approach him, well known for his courage in the field, and ready (only too ready for the State's necessities) to bestow office, honours, emoluments on all who approached him as candidates for his favour. He is accused by his critic<sup>1</sup> of having increased the number of the highest military commands (Mastership of the Cavalry, and Mastership of the Infantry) from two to five, and doubled all the lower grades held by generals, tribunes, and so forth. Though Zosimus affirms that this was done without adding to the strength of the army, we may well believe that it was upon the whole a wise policy on the part of Theodosius to surround himself with a large number of active and zealous officers, more than sufficient to replace the terrible losses sustained at Hadrianople. In the guerilla war which he had now for some time to wage, leadership was more important than great masses of men. He had to restore the shaken confidence of the Roman troops and to terrify the barbarians into retreat by a series of daring expeditions such as Gideon in old time conducted against the Midianites; and now, as in the days of Gideon, courage and mutual confidence between general and army were the first and essential conditions of success. Probably too, he already revolved in his mind the scheme which he afterwards so successfully matured, of enlisting the barbarians themselves in the service of the Empire; and, if that were to be done, it was all-important that he should draw round his Council-table a group of brave and experienced officers, whom the Goth would obey because he had found

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<sup>1</sup> iv. 27.



BOOK I. them terrible on the battle-field. Still it is obvious  
 CH. 5. that this policy rendered necessary heavy demands on  
 379. the exhausted treasury of the State, exhausted by the very ravages which it was meant to terminate. Every one of the five new *Magistri* received, we are told, as liberal allowances for his staff as had been formerly bestowed upon each of his two predecessors. The Emperor's own table was spread with a magnificence which formed an unpleasant contrast to the misery of the ruined villages of Thrace. Cooks and butlers and eunuchs, 'a list of whom would fill a volume,' swarmed around the princely Spaniard, and those among them who were distinguished by their handsome presence and courtly address might hope to supplant the responsible Ministers of the State. Already, it may be, in the first flush of the new Emperor's popularity, it was possible to discern the harbingers of future storms: already a veteran statesman might surmise that the openhandedness of this affable soldier would one day make the men sigh for the parsimony of the jealous Valens.

Panegyric  
 of Themis-  
 tius.

However, for the time, the comparisons were all in favour of Theodosius. It was probably early in 379 that the orator Themistius presented himself at Thessalonica in order to offer his tribute of florid panegyric<sup>1</sup> to the new Emperor, and at the same time to hint the desire of the senators and nobles of Constantinople that the fountain of honour, which had in their opinion been kept of late too closely sealed, might now be set running freely. An earlier deputation had been sent by the Senate of Constantinople with formal congratulations on the accession of Theodosius, but

<sup>1</sup> Oration xiv.

Themistius had been prevented by sickness from taking part in that deputation. At the time he bitterly regretted this absence, but now, he says, he almost rejoices over it, since the ardour of his spirit has conquered the infirmities of his body, and he is enabled to behold with his own eyes the return of the golden age. Was the orator thinking of the crooked legs and mean appearance of the predecessor of Theodosius when he said, 'It is now permitted me to behold an Emperor whom I can only describe in the words of Homer<sup>1</sup>—

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"Ne'er have these eyes of mine beheld so noble a presence,  
Never one so majestic: in truth thine aspect is king-like"<sup>1</sup>?

Then with a touch of something which looks like genuine enthusiasm he breaks forth. 'Thou art the one man who outweighest all others to us. Instead of them we look to thee. Thou art to us instead of Dacia, instead of Thrace, instead of Illyria [the provinces torn from us by the barbarians], instead of our legions, instead of all our other warlike equipment, which vanished more swiftly than a shadow. Now we who were erewhile pursued are driving our foes headlong. By the new hopes which thou hast kindled in us we stand, we take breath, we are confident that we shall arrest the Goths in their prosperous career, and shall extinguish the wide-spreading conflagration which they have kindled and which hitherto neither Haemus<sup>2</sup>, nor the boundaries of Thrace, or of Illyria, rough of passage as they are to the traveller, have been able to arrest. . .

<sup>1</sup> Iliad iii. 169-170. Priam is speaking of Agamemnon. Themistius changes *εἶκε* to *εἶκας* to make the compliment more direct.

Καλὸν δ' οὕτω ἐγὼν οὕτω ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν  
Οὐδ' οὕτω γεραίον βασιλῆϊ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ εἶκε.

<sup>2</sup> The Balkans.

BOOK I. It was no fiction of the poet when Homer represented  
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Achilles as by his mere battle-cry repelling the conquering barbarians: for those accursed ones, ere a battle was yet joined, when thou hadst merely moved up thine outposts to theirs, lost their old audacity. This have they felt already. What more shall they feel when they see thee brandishing thy spear, shaking thy shield, when they see close to them the gleam of thy burnished helmet?’

Fulsome as is the praise which the orator bestows on the possessor of supreme power, it is clear that the new Emperor's accession had in a notable manner raised the spirits of his subjects, and was beginning to depress those of the barbarians. And herewith agrees the calm judgment of the Gothic historian<sup>1</sup>, recorded after the lapse of a century and a half. ‘When Theodosius was associated in the Empire by Gratian in the room of Valens, the Goths soon perceived that military discipline was replaced on a better footing, the cowardice and sloth of former Emperors being laid aside: and when they perceived it they were struck with terror. For the Emperor, keen in intellect, strong in courage, and wise in counsel, tempering the severity of his orders by liberality and an affable demeanour, was ever rousing his demoralised army to brave deeds: and the soldiers observing the favourable change in their leader soon recovered their lost self-confidence.’

Of the actual events of the campaign of 379 we hear but little. The dates of his laws<sup>2</sup> enable us to trace the movements of Theodosius, keeping his line of communication open with Gratian at Sirmium, in July

<sup>1</sup> Jordanes, *De Rebus Geticis*, xxvii.

<sup>2</sup> As collected from the Theodosian Code by Iland, pp. 70 and 72.

at Scupi<sup>1</sup>, 100 miles north of Thessalonica, in August BOOK I.  
CH. 5. apparently on the southern shore of the Danube<sup>2</sup>, in 379. January (380) back again at Thessalonica. We are told<sup>3</sup> that not only did courage, owing to the successful operations which Theodosius commanded, return to the Imperial infantry and cavalry, but that even the peasants became formidable to the barbarians, and the workers in the mines, at the Emperor's orders, threw down the gold-ore and took the iron of the soldier into their hands.

The honours of this campaign, however, as far as Brave  
deeds of  
Modar.  
Zosimus,  
iv. 25. Zosimus may be trusted to award them, fell not to Theodosius himself so much as to Modar, one of those generals with whom, as we have seen, he wisely surrounded himself. This man, a Goth by birth and even of royal lineage, but a Christian and of the orthodox faith<sup>4</sup>, had recently deserted from the cause of his countrymen and taken service under the Roman eagles. He had given striking proofs of his fidelity to his new lords, and had accordingly been appointed one of the five Masters of the Soldiery<sup>5</sup>. He selected a bit of high table-land among the Balkans, upon which, unknown to the Goths, he pitched his camp, concealed doubtless by surrounding eminences. There he watched

<sup>1</sup> Now Uskub.

<sup>2</sup> If, that is to say, the 'Vico Augusti' of the Theodosian Code be the same with the 'Augustis' of the Itinerary and the Tabula Peutingeriana, which is by no means clear.

<sup>3</sup> By Themistius (*ubi supra*).

<sup>4</sup> Ifland (p. 70) seems justified in drawing this conclusion from the unqualified language of Gregory Nazianzen in the letter addressed to Modares (or Modarius), (Ep. 136).

<sup>5</sup> Καὶ δι' ἣν ἐπεδείξατο πίστιν στρατιωτικῆς προβεβλημένος ἀρχῆς probably means this.



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his opportunity, and when the barbarians, revelling in the plunder which they had gathered from the villages and unwalled towns of Thrace, were indulging in a drunken debauch in the plains below, he armed his soldiers with sword and shield, the coats of mail and heavier armour being left behind, and led them stealthily down the mountain to the Gothic camp. Surprised and unarmed, the barbarians for the most part awoke from their stupor only to find themselves transfixed by the swords of the Romans. In a short time the whole of this host was slaughtered, and their arms and ornaments became the spoil of the conquerors. Then the soldiers of Modar rushed forward to the rude waggon-encampment, where the women and children were quartered. No fewer than 4000 Gothic waggons, so we are told, were taken possession of, and all the women, the children, and the captive slaves who were accustomed on the march to walk and ride upon the waggons by turns<sup>1</sup>, fell into the hands of the legionaries. The Roman captives were no doubt released, and the Gothic women and children sold into slavery.

The success of this murderous undertaking of Modar's—a success which was perhaps partly due to his knowledge of the moral weaknesses of his countrymen—and the fear of its repetition, seem to have determined the fortunes of the campaign of 379. The Goths were probably for the most part driven to the north of the Balkans, and some successful battles must have been

<sup>1</sup> Ἐπὶ δὲ τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τοὺς παῖδας ὁρμήσαντες ἀμάξας μὲν εἶλον τετρακισχιλίας, αἰχμαλώτους δὲ ὅσους ἦν εἰκὸς ἐπὶ τοσούτων ἀμαξῶν φέρεσθαι, δίχα τῶν βάδην ταύταις ἀκολουθούντων καὶ ἐξ ἀμοιβῆς, οἷα φιλεῖ γίνεσθαι, τὰς ἀναπαύσεις ἐπ' αὐτῶν ποιουμένων (Zosimus, iv. 25). An interesting picture of a Gothic native army on its march.



fought, perhaps on the southern bank of the Danube, not with the Goths only but with other wild tribes which had swarmed over the great river. On the 17th of November Theodosius was able to send official messengers to all the great cities of the Empire announcing a series of victories over 'the Goths, the Alani and the Huns'.<sup>1</sup> Still, even the region south of the Balkans can hardly have been entirely cleared of the invaders, for we find the Emperor yet delaying to take up his abode in his capital, and instead thereof fixing his headquarters for the winter at Thessalonica.

It is a proof how much of the recent success had been due to the energy of one man, that the temporary suspension of his powers changed the whole aspect of affairs. In the early part of the year 380 Theodosius fell sick at Thessalonica. Probably the same morbid influences which had previously broken up the camp of the Gothic besiegers, now laid low their energetic enemy. The crisis of the illness lasted apparently somewhat less than a month, as we find edicts bearing his signature both on the 2nd and 27th of February, but none in the intervening period. There is reason to think, however, that during many months of the year 380 he was unable to take the field in person.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile a change of vast

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

379.

Sickness  
of Theo-  
dosius.

<sup>1</sup> 'Ausonio et Olybrio Coss. [379] His Cons. levatus est Theodosius Aug. ab Augusto Gratiano die xiv Kal. Februar. in civitate Sirmio. Ipso anno multa bella Romani cum Gothis commiserunt. Deinde victoriae nuntiatae sunt adversus Gothos, Alanos atque Hunos die xv Kal. Decembr.' This important notice is from the *Descriptio Consulium Idatio Adscripta* (Roncalli, ii. 95), which, whether rightly attributed to Idatius or not, undoubtedly contains some valuable extracts from the official records kept at Constantinople. (See Holder-Egger's paper in the *Neues Archiv*, i. 227 et seq.)

<sup>2</sup> This is made probable by the fact that almost all his decrees for this year are dated from Thessalonica (there is perhaps some error

BOOK I. importance to the internal politics of the Empire had been  
 CH. 5. caused by this illness. Theodosius, who like his father

380.

had postponed the rite of baptism, with its supposed mysterious efficacy for the washing away of past sins, to as late a period as possible, now, believing himself to be at the point of death, received the lustral water from the hand of Bishop Acholius. He laid himself down on his sick bed a lukewarm, if not actually heterodox, Christian: he arose from it a zealous champion of Athanasian orthodoxy.

Return of  
the bar-  
barians.

Postponing for a short time the fuller consideration of the religious policy which Theodosius henceforward adopted, let us observe the effect which his sickness produced on the struggle between the Empire and the Goths. The provinces south of the Balkans, if they had been cleared of the barbarians during the preceding year, were now again overrun by their desolating swarms. Fritigern, satiated apparently with the ravage of Moesia and Thrace, directed his course southward to Epirus, Thessaly and Achaia: while his old allies, the Ostrogothic chiefs Alatheus and Saphrax, marked down a new prey, crossing over the Danube where it flows from north to south, and attacking the Western Empire in its frontier province, Pannonia.

Inter-  
vention of  
Gratian.

With all these barbarous hordes pouring in upon the devastated Empire, and himself still unable from physical weakness to ride forth at the head of his legions, Theodosius was constrained to call upon his Western colleague for help. Gratian did not himself

about four laws at the end of April and the beginning of May dated from Antioch and Damascus): and also by Gratian's taking the chief part in the conclusion of the treaty with the Goths, to be shortly mentioned.

take the field against the Goths, but he seems to have journeyed from Trier to Milan and Aquileia<sup>1</sup>. From the latter place he doubtless superintended the defence of Pannonia (as to which our authorities tell us nothing), and the attack upon the Goths in Thessaly and Macedonia. The latter duty was entrusted to two Frankish chiefs named Bauto and Arbogast. It is a striking proof of the extent to which Teutonic soldiers had already succeeded in establishing themselves in the service of the Empire, to find such a high command as this, at a most critical period for the State, entrusted to two Franks from the forests beyond the Scheldt. Both were destined to rise even higher in the Roman commonwealth. Bauto was to be an Emperor's chief minister, and his daughter was—after his death—to be hailed as Augusta; Arbogast was to place one of his humble friends and dependents on the Imperial throne. But both were at this time steadfastly loyal to the great civilised Empire under whose eagles they had enlisted, and the fact that they were men of war, whose hands were soiled by no ignoble gains, not venal hucksterers like Lupicinus and Maximus, had gained for them the enthusiastic love and confidence of their soldiers.

We hear little or nothing as to the details of the campaign conducted by the two Frankish generals, but from its result we may conclude that it was entirely successful. Macedonia and Thessaly appear to have been freed from their barbarian invaders, who were now probably for the most part ranged along the southern shore of the Danube, in the regions where four years previously they had been peacefully settled by Valens.

<sup>1</sup> Our information as to these movements of Gratian is derived from the Code.

BOOK I. About this time Fritigern seems to have died, perhaps  
 CH. 5. slain in battle with Bauto or Arbogast. And now, by  
 380. one of those strange changes in men's minds which so often occur when civilised and barbarous nations meet in battle, there came to Gratian (who by this time had marched eastward as far as Sirmium<sup>1</sup> and was therefore close to the theatre of events) an opportunity for concluding a safe and honourable peace.

Peace con-  
 cluded.

Fritigern being dead, the one dauntless spirit which had hitherto breathed hope and mutual loyalty into the Gothic kinships, was gone. There were among them troubles and dissensions (which will shortly be alluded to) in connection with Fritigern's old rival, Athanaric. And after all, every Gothic warrior in the ranks might well ask himself what he was fighting for. To take the walled cities and make himself master of all their strange delights, the Goth had found impossible. It was easy to wander wide over the plains of Thessaly and Thrace, burning villas, driving off cattle, carrying away the provincials into captivity. But this process could not go on for ever, and with every year that the war lasted it became harder to procure a bare subsistence, much more the luxuries which were the earlier prize of rapine, in the thrice desolated valleys through which the barbarians roved. Were it not better, now that they had proved their might, and done deeds of daring which would be told of in song by generations yet unborn, to settle down once again within the limits of the Empire as the friends, not the foes, of a generous Augustus?

This, or something like this, was the calculation on

<sup>1</sup> According to the Code, Gratian was at Sirmium on the 8th of September, 380.



the barbarians' side ; and on the other hand the conclusion of the offered peace was for the Emperors a piece of most wise statesmanship. The fatal policy of Valens could not now be undone. The Gothic nation was within the borders of the Empire : to destroy and to expel it were both impossible. The mistake of Hadrianople must not be repeated, nor the fortunes of the Empire hazarded upon the cast of a single battle. What war there was must be of the tedious Fabian kind, harassing the invaders, cooping them up in the mountains, falling upon them in small detachments, and wearing them out by hardship and famine. But, all this while, the once wealthy and flourishing provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia would be slowly bleeding to death. It was surely better that there should be peace between the Empire and her new visitors, peace on terms not dissimilar to those which Fritigern had asked for, perhaps insincerely, before the battle of Hadrianople, but which his people, tired of those winters in the snowy Balkans, might now be willing loyally to accept. These terms involved a settlement of the Goths south of the Danube resembling that which they had previously possessed in Dacia ; only that the barbarians should be more blended with the Roman inhabitants, and should more distinctly hold their lands on condition of military service in the armies of the Empire, becoming in the political language of the day *foederati*.

Thus it came to pass that in the language of the Gothic historian (which is in the main confirmed by the Roman chroniclers), ' Gratian, though he had collected an army, did not nevertheless trust in arms, but determining to conquer the Goths by gifts and favour, and bestowing



BOOK I. provisions upon them, entered into a covenant with  
 CH. 5. them and so made peace. And when, after these  
 380. things, the Emperor Theodosius recovered his health  
 and found that the contract which he himself had  
 wished for was concluded between the Goths and the  
 Romans, he accepted the fact with very grateful mind,  
 and gave his own consent to that peace<sup>1</sup>.

Athanasius  
 driven into  
 exile,

This reconciliation between the Visigoths and the Empire was connected, partly as cause and partly as effect, with another most important event which marked the beginning of 381, the submission of the sturdy old chief Athanasius, who had so long upheld among his countrymen the banner of defiance to Rome, and refusal to amalgamate with Roman civilisation. Five years before, when his kinsmen were praying for admission into the Empire, he too appeared with his warriors and his waggons on the Wallachian shore of the Danube. When he heard that his old enemy Fritigern was admitted, but that the Ostrogoths under Alatheus and Saphrax were excluded, the proud and sensitive chief, mindful of his own past discourtesy to Rome, would not run the risk of a similar rebuff, but retired into the recesses of Dacia to a region of mountains and forests called Caucaland<sup>2</sup>, and there, from behind

<sup>1</sup> Jordanes, *De Rebus Geticis*, xxvii, xxviii. The most important entry in the Roman chronicles is in Prosper, s. a. 380: 'Procurente Gratiano, eo quod Theodosius aegrotaret, pax firmatur cum Gothis.' This entry is absent in one important MS., the 'Parmensis.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Ad Caucalandensem locum altitudine silvarum inaccessum et montium, cum suis omnibus declinavit, Sarmatis inde extrusis.' Amm. Mar. xxxi. 4. 13. Caucaland looks like a Teutonic name. Zeuss (*Die Deutschen*, &c. p. 410) identifies it with *Hauha-land*, the Gothic equivalent of High-land. It was probably the eastern portion of Transylvania.

the mountain-wall of the Carpathians, bade defiance to his enemies the Huns. An unexpected foe roused up the old lion from his lair. The Ostrogothic chiefs, Alatheus and Saphrax, retreating before the now better-disciplined army of Theodosius, re-crossed the Danube, and avenging perhaps some old grudge of pre-Hunnish days, expelled Athanaric from his kingdom<sup>1</sup>.

He fled into the territory of Theodosius, who received him courteously, loaded him with presents, and escorted him into Constantinople. Let Jordanes describe for us the effect produced by the sight of New Rome upon the man who had been all his life the ideal Rome-hater<sup>2</sup>. 'As he entered the royal city he said, wondering, "Lo now I behold what I have so often heard with unbelief, the splendour of this great city." Then turning his eyes this way and that way, and beholding the glorious situation of the city, the array of ships, the lofty walls, the multitudes of various nations all formed into one well-ordered army (like a fountain springing forth through many holes, yet collected again into one stream), he exclaimed, "A God upon earth, doubtless, is this Emperor, and whoever lifts a hand against him is guilty of his own blood."'

The Emperor continued to treat his barbarian guest with high courtesy, and the guest remained in the same state of awe-struck admiration at all that he beheld. But his residence beside the Bosphorus was not to be

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus iv. 34 must be combined with Jordanes xxvii (as to the defeat of Alatheus and Saphrax by Theodosius), and is confirmed by an incidental allusion in Ammianus (xxvii. 5. 10): '*Athanaricus proximorum factione genitalibus terris expulsus.*' Evidently it was not by Huns or 'Sarmatians' that he was driven forth from Caucaland.

<sup>2</sup> De Reb. Get. xxviii.

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CH. 5.

381.

and courteously  
received  
by Theodosius.

Death and  
burial of  
Athanaric.

BOOK I. of long duration. His entry into Constantinople was  
 CH. 5. made on the 11th of January 381, and on the 25th  
 381. of the same month he died<sup>1</sup>, broken-hearted, it may be,  
 at the collapse of his barbarian State, or more probably  
 pining away, as the American Red-skin pines, in contact  
 with a higher and more complex civilisation. Theodo-  
 sius honoured him almost more in his death than in his  
 life, provided for him a funeral of extraordinary mag-  
 nificence, and himself rode before the bier as they  
 carried the corpse of the old Gothic chieftain to the  
 grave.

It was wisely as well as courteously done, this  
 homage to Rome's old enemy. The heart of the  
 Visigothic nation was touched by the respect shown by  
 the great Augustus to the man who by the death of  
 Fritigern had become their unquestioned king and  
 leader<sup>2</sup>. Not only his own personal followers, but the  
 great mass of the people, accepted gladly the terms  
 which Gratian's generals had offered to so many of their  
 nation in the preceding year, and became *foederati* of  
 the Empire.

As to this important change we have not so many  
 details as we could desire, and our account of it must

<sup>1</sup> These dates furnished us by the apparently accurate 'Fasti Idatiani' (in Roncalli, ii. 95) and confirmed by Marcellinus Comes (ibid. 268: 'eodemque mense morbo periit') must outweigh the vague 'paucis mensibus interjectis' of Jordanes. Prosper says accurately enough that the death of Athanaric took place 'xv quo fuerat susceptus die,' but incorrectly says 'occiditur.' The 'morbo periit' of Marcellinus is more in harmony with the other authorities.

<sup>2</sup> 'Aithanarico rege, qui tunc Fritigerno successerat' (Jord. u. s. xxviii). It will be observed that the title of *Judex* is dropped now that the Ostrogothic over-lordship is at an end, and Athanaric, even in his low estate, is now *Rex*.

be framed from scattered and fragmentary notices, to some extent helped out by conjecture. Doubtless one condition of the *foedus* was that all the ravaging inroads which had been made into the provinces south of the Balkans since the day of the banquet at Marcianople should cease, and that the Goths should return to the settlements assigned them in Moesia Inferior<sup>1</sup> by Valens, and earn their bread by the cultivation of the soil. But, though we have little or no information on this point, it seems reasonable to suppose that the high-spirited Gothic warriors were not called upon again to submit themselves to the degrading rule of such governors as Lupicinus and Maximus. More probable is it that they now stood outside of the whole administrative system of the Empire, paying no taxes, and free from obedience to the Roman judges, except when disputes arose between them and the Provincials. Thus (though it must be again repeated that we speak here only from conjecture) we may conceive of the Goths as reproducing in Moesia some of the characteristic features of German life as described to us by Tacitus, with its public meetings of the men of the village and the county<sup>2</sup>, its strong, but not unlimited power vested in the chiefs and kings; perhaps (but here our conjectures must become even more hesitating than elsewhere) with its peculiar agricultural system and periodical redistribution of the land.

In return for the privileges thus conceded, and for the (probable) immunity from taxation<sup>3</sup> which must

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CH. 5.

Meaning  
of the  
*Foedus*  
cum  
Gothis.

<sup>1</sup> And perhaps in Dacia Ripensis.

<sup>2</sup> Vicus and pagus.

<sup>3</sup> A strong confirmation of the theory (probable on *à priori* grounds) that the Goths enjoyed special immunities from taxation and from the



BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

have practically rendered almost the whole province of Moesia useless to the Imperial exchequer, what was the Gothic contribution? Whenever they were summoned by the Emperor they were to muster under their own chiefs, with their own horses, arms, and accoutrements, and to fight under the supreme command of the Roman Master of the Soldiery, for the defence of the Empire. The amount of pay (*stipendium*) which was to be given to each barbarian warrior, noble or simple free-man, was probably fixed in the original contract entered into between Theodosius and the chieftain who may have succeeded Athanaric. This contract was the *Foedus* which constituted the Goths *Foederati*.

The Foederati compared with the *Socii* and *Auxilia* of earlier times.

In this arrangement there was, besides much present statesmanship, a certain curious reversion to some of the oldest traditions of the past in the Roman state. The Allies (*Socii*), consisting first of the soldiers of the Latin cities and then of warriors from the various provinces of Italy, always formed an important part of the hosts of the Republic, somewhat outnumbering the regular Roman legionaries, and fighting for the most part on the wings of the army, while the legions

rule of the civil magistrates of the Empire, is afforded by a passage in the XVIth Oration of Themistius. He brings forward the example of the Gaulish invaders of Asia Minor, who had been settled in Galatia and had given their names to that province. 'Now,' he says, 'no one could call them barbarians but altogether Romans. Their manner of life is the same as ours: they pay the same tributes, undergo the same military service, receive the same magistrates, obey the same laws. So too before long will it be with the Goths. Now the wounds which they have inflicted are recent: but soon we shall have them bound by the same treaties, eating at the same tables, serving with us in the same army, undertaking the same public duties.' Evidently this was not the state of things established by the *foedus*.



were drawn up in the centre<sup>1</sup>. When the Italian provincials acquired the full rights of Roman citizens, the separate organisation of the *Socii* died away, the Samnite and the Marsian taking their place in the legions side by side with the soldier born in sight of the Capitol. But their places were virtually taken by the *Auxilia*, bodies of troops raised in those provinces beyond sea, which became successively the theatres of war. Under the Empire, as the rights of citizenship were more liberally granted, this distinction also became less important; and when at length, in the reign of Caracalla, those rights were bestowed on all the freeborn males throughout the Roman world, it really lost all its original meaning. But the two divisions of the army, *Legiones* and *Auxilia*, still existed side by side, the latter word being apparently used to designate a somewhat lower class of soldiers, employed in more irregular, skirmishing warfare than the legionaries. In our own country, for example, while three legions, the Second, the Sixth, and the Twentieth, remained for generations permanently stationed at the three great nerve-centres of Roman power, Caerleon, York, and Chester, the outpost duty of defending the wall which stretched from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway was entrusted to less dignified bodies of troops, such as the First Cohort of Batavians or the Second Ala of Asturians, who all passed under the generic name of *Auxilia*.

Still, as has been said, the old distinction between Roman and Ally had practically vanished, for the Gaul,

<sup>1</sup> In the year 225 B.C., according to Polybius, the legionaries numbered 325,300 and the *Socii* 443,000: total 768,300. (See Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, ii. 381.)

BOOK I. the Spaniard, or the Illyrian felt himself as much a  
 CH. 5. Roman citizen, and had as good a chance of one day wearing the purple as a man born on the banks of the Tiber. But it reappeared, when Theodosius and Gratian, making a virtue of necessity, granted permanent settlements within the Empire to the followers of Fritigern and Athanaric, on condition of their mustering round the eagles in the day of battle.

Mediaeval  
 Analogies.

As this institution of the *foederati*<sup>1</sup> reproduced some of the features of the military system of the Republic, so it foreshadowed some of the features of the military systems of the Middle Ages. Though in the fourth century we are still separated by a vast tract of time from the establishment of the feudal system, it is easy to see how this contract between Emperor and *foederati*—so much land for so much service on the battle-field—will one day ripen into regular feudal tenure.

Modern  
 Analogies.

In more modern days it might be possible to find analogies to the position of the *foederati* in that occu-

<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be questioned whether the word *Foederati* was yet applied to the Goths, though it seems to me most probable that it was. It first appears in the Theodosian Code in the year 406, when a law of Honorius (lib. vii. tit. 13, 16) authorises the enlistment in the army of the slaves of 'Foederati and Dediticii.' And Olympiodorus (apud Photium, iii. 258, ed. Migne) seems to say that both the names of Buccellarius and Foederati were first introduced in the time of Honorius. His language however is not quite clear, and as Suidas and other writers emphatically say that Foederati meant treaty-bound Goths, ὑποσπόνδοι Γότθοι or Σκύθαι, no time seems more probable for the first introduction of the term than the early part of the reign of Theodosius, unless indeed, which is very possible, it had been already applied to the Goths in the time of Constantine. This last is the account of the matter given by Jordanes (De Reb. Get. xvi and xxi). In the fifth century Foederati was a word in pretty frequent use. See for the chief passages in which it occurs Godefroy's note on the above law of Honorius (Codex Theodosianus: ed. Ritter, ii. 391).

pied by the Cossacks under their Hetman in the wars of Peter the Great and Charles the Twelfth, in the constitution of the 'Military Frontier' of Austria and Hungary under the Habsburgs, or in the place assigned to Sikhs and Ghoorkas in the armies of the Empress of India. Like these latter troops (as we shall see hereafter) the foes turned friends and enlisted under the banner of their conqueror, did him good service in the crisis of his fortunes.

In order to understand more fully the policy thus adopted by Theodosius towards the Goths, it will be well to hear the allusions made to it by Themistius in his Oration<sup>1</sup> on the choice of Saturninus for the Consulship (383). The grey old rhetorician, who was by this time the tutor of Arcadius, son of the Emperor, and was soon after to be raised to high official position by that Emperor's favour, would of course represent the Imperial policy in the most favourable light to his hearers; and we may consider that in listening to his speech we are reading a leading article in the official newspaper of the Empire.

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CH. 5.

Themistius  
on the  
Foederati  
(in his  
Oration on  
the Consul-  
ship of  
Saturninus).

It seems that the honour of the Consulship for the year 383, the *quinquennalia* of the accession of Theodosius, had been offered by Gratian to his Eastern colleague. Themistius can hardly find words to express his admiration of the magnanimity of Theodosius in not only declining the brilliant honour for himself, but forbearing to claim it for Arcadius or some other member of his family, and handing it on to Saturninus, a stranger in blood, to reward him for the services which he had rendered to the state.

<sup>1</sup> Oratio xvi (ed. Paris, 1684).

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383.

‘What are those services?’ says Themistius. ‘I might enumerate his great deeds in war, but as I am a lover of peace and of peaceful, harmonious words, I will rather turn to these and describe the benefits which the forethought of our Emperor has provided for us through the instrumentality of the new Consul. After that terrible Iliad of ours by the Danube, fire and sword were carried wide over Thrace and Illyricum; our armies vanished like a shadow: no Emperor presided over the State, and no mountains seemed high enough, no rivers deep enough, to prevent the barbarians from swarming over them to our ruin. Celts and Assyrians, Armenians, Africans, and Iberians, upon every frontier of our territory stood armed and threatening. Things had come to such a pass that we were prepared to hail it as a signal success, if only no worse evil might befall us than those which we had already undergone.

‘Then in the midst of the general despair came that impulse from on high by which Gratian was moved to invite Theodosius to share his throne; and at once over land and sea there spread a hope unknown before. Theodosius, as soon as he had grasped the reins of the Empire, began, like a skilful charioteer, to consider what lay within the capacity of his horses; and he first dared to note this fact, that the strength of the Romans now lies not in iron, not in breastplates and shields, not in countless masses of men, but in Reason. He perceived that we possess that other kind of force and equipment which, to those who reign according to the mind of God, comes down silently from above, and makes all nations subject to us, which tames the savage soul, and before which arms and artillery and horses and the obstinacy of the Goth and the audacity of the



Alan and the madness of the Massagete [Hun] all give way. This is that divine gift the praises of which we learned in our boyhood from the poets. So too Esop in his fable of the Wind and the Sun set forth the superiority of persuasion to violence; and the bards who sang of the wars in heaven declare that the giants, engaging in battle with the gods, were all able to stand up against Mars, but were lulled to sleep by the Caduceus of Mercury.

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383.

‘Deliberating with himself to whom he should entrust this message of reconciliation, he found none so fit as Saturninus, his old comrade in arms, whom he knew to be like-minded in this matter with himself. Even as Achilles sent out Patroclus to deliver the Greeks in the extremity of their peril, so, but with far happier auguries, did Theodosius send forth Saturninus; and as the son of Peleus arrayed his friend in his armour, so did the Emperor equip his messenger with his own arms of gentleness, of patience, and of persuasion. Saturninus came to the camp of the Goths, and as soon as he saw he conquered. He offered them an amnesty for the past, he rooted out of their minds the suspicions germinating from their own misdeeds, he set before them the benefits which they might enjoy as friends and servants of the Empire. Thus did he win a peaceful victory and lead their chiefs back in triumph to his master. Unarmed, except with their swords which they held out like olive-branches; with sad faces and downcast eyes, they walked with shame through the provinces which they had ravaged, and kept their hands religiously from the remnants of property which they had left there. They were tamed, they were softened, they



BOOK I. were subdued by the wise words of their conductor.  
CH. 5.

383.

I might almost say that he led them with their hands bound behind their backs, so that one looking upon them would have doubted whether he had persuaded, or had conquered, them.

‘It was considered a great thing when Corbulo induced Tiridates, King of Armenia, to submit to Nero, but the knowledge of the vile character of his master must have saddened even that success to Corbulo. How much greater the happiness of Saturninus who serves such a master as Theodosius! And the Armenians are a race easily lifted up with pride and soon cast down again, a race whose very liberty differs not much from slavery. Whereas these barbarians with whom we have to deal are men of most inflexible souls, men to whom the thought of humbling themselves ever so little is far more bitter than death. Yet this is the nation whose chiefs we have seen offering, not some tattered flag, but their very swords, their victorious swords, as a tribute to the Emperor; yea, and humbling themselves before him and clasping his knees as Thetis clasped the knees of the Thunderer, that they might hear from his lips the word, the irrevocable word of peace and reconciliation.

‘Now, that name Scythian [Goth], which was so hateful in our ears, how pleasant, how friendly it sounds! Now the Goths celebrate together with us the festival of our prince [the Quinquennalia], which is in truth one of rejoicing for the victories gained over themselves. Do you complain that their race has not been exterminated? I will not ask, “*Could* they have been exterminated?” I will concede that they might have been easily destroyed without loss to ourselves,

though certainly the history of the Gothic war makes that concession an improbable one. Still, I say, which of the two is better, that Thrace should be filled with corpses or with cultivators of the fields; that we should walk through ghastly desolation or through well-tilled corn-lands? that we should count up the dead men lying there or the ploughers ploughing? Is it better that we should bring Phrygians and Bithynians to settle in the waste lands, or that we should dwell there in peace with the men whom we have subdued? Already I hear from those who have visited those parts that the Goths are working up the iron of their swords and breastplates into mattocks and pruning-hooks, and, bidding a long good-bye to Mars, are paying all their devotions to Ceres and to Bacchus.

‘The course now pursued by Theodosius is not without a precedent in the history of the Republic. Masinissa, once the ally of Carthage, taken prisoner by the Romans and not put to death, became their steadfast friend and a strong defence against the enemies who afterwards attacked them. In our case the State which, like some mighty merchantman strained by wind and wave, was leaking at every seam, is brought into dock and is once more made sea-worthy. The roads are again open. The mountains are no longer terrible to the traveller. The plains are now bringing forth their fruits. No longer is the shore of the Danube a stage for the bloody dance of war, but seeds are being hidden in it and ploughs do furrow it. Villas and farm-buildings are again raising their heads. A delightful atmosphere of rest pervades the land; and the Empire, like some great living creature, feeling

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.  
383.

BOOK I. no more the laceration of its wounded members, draws  
 CH. 5. one deep breath of delight for ended sorrow.'

383.

With further praises of the generosity and clemency of Theodosius and with anticipations of a victory over Persia, no less complete than his bloodless and tearless victory over the Goths, Themistius ended his oration. The loss of the Mesopotamian provinces (the Alsace and Lorraine of the Empire) still rankled in the hearts of all true Roman citizens, and no motive for loyalty to Theodosius could be stronger than the hope that he would one day recover them. Even after the defeat at Hadrianople, not the barbarians of the North in their trackless forests, but the great autocrat of Persia was looked upon as the dangerous, the hereditary enemy of Rome.

Invasion  
 of the  
 Greuthungi  
 under  
 Odotheus,  
 386.

After the reconciliation of the Visigoths to the Empire and their acceptance of the position of *foederati*, there seems to have been almost unbroken peace between Theodosius and the barbarians on his northern frontier. The only exception that is distinctly mentioned is the invasion of the Greuthungi or Ostrogoths five years after the submission of the Visigoths. What commotion in the anarchic Empire of the Huns may have caused another swarm of their Ostrogothic subjects to leave their homes in the Ukraine we know not; but they appear, a numerous horde, with many barbarous confederates of unknown origin, on the northern shore of the Danube in the summer of 386. The old men, the women and children, were with them. It was therefore a national migration, not a mere plunderer's foray, and the leader of the movement was Odotheus, whom we may possibly identify with that Ostrogothic chief Alatheus, the comrade of Saphrax

on the field of Hadrianople<sup>1</sup>. They came in such vast numbers that (according to the perhaps exaggerated language of the poet) three thousand barks were needed to transport them across the river; and they asked, perhaps at first in friendly guise, for permission to settle within the limits of the Empire. Promotus, a brave and experienced officer, at that time commanding as Master of the Infantry in Thrace, refused the required permission, and drew up his troops along the southern shore of the Danube to dispute the passage. Not content with merely defensive measures, he devised a skilful if not very honourable stratagem in order to entice the Ostrogoths to their destruction. He secretly instructed some men who were acquainted with their language (possibly Visigothic *foederati*) to steal across the river and open negotiations for the betrayal of the Imperial army by night to their enemies. The apparent traitors demanded a high price for their treason: the chiefs hesitated and tried to reduce it: the deserters stuck to their terms and at length the compact was sealed:—so much blood-money to be paid at once on the conclusion of the bargain and the balance when the barbarians had the Roman army in their power. Odotheus then made his dispositions for reaping, as he supposed, an easy harvest of victory. His best and bravest warriors, the flower of his troops, were to be sent over at once to environ the sleeping host; then the troops of secondary quality; then lastly the men who were too young or too old for fighting, to do the shouting when the victory was won.

<sup>1</sup> We get the name of Odotheus from Zosimus (iv. 35) and Claudian (De Quarto Consulatu Honorii, 626), neither of whom, I think, elsewhere mentions Alatheus.



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386.

Meanwhile Promotus, guided by the concerted signals of the pretended traitors, was making his arrangements in the deepening dusk of the autumn evening. Along the shore he ranged his ships—probably the heavy provision-ships of his army—in three lines, extending for a distance of two miles and a half. Some swifter fighting-ships he kept apparently to manœuvre in mid-channel. The Ostrogoths embarked in their little canoes, small, and made for the most part out of the trunk of a single tree, but multitudinous in number. While they were rowing silently across the black river, the Roman general, still guided by the fire-signals of his confederates, charged in upon them with his powerful war-ships. The momentum of the Roman galleys, joined to the force of the impetuous Danube, was at once fatal to the little skiffs which contained the flower of the barbarian army. On all sides were heard the crash of broken barks, the groans of dying men, the despairing cry of some strong swimmer borne down beneath the eddying Danube by the weight of his cumbrous armour. If some wearied swimmer or the rowers of some disabled bark struggled on towards the southern shore, they were there confronted by the triple line of the Roman merchantmen, the soldiers on board of which assailed the hapless fugitives with whatever missile lay nearest to their hands. The affair was not so much a battle as a massacre, and soon the Danube was covered with the floating carcasses of Gothic warriors and the splintered fragments of Gothic spears.

When the destruction of the army was complete, the Roman soldiers were permitted to swarm across the stream in order to plunder the barbarian camp. Much



spoil they found there, but the chief prizes were the wives and children of the deluded and annihilated host. However, the revenge of the Empire was on this occasion wisely softened by mercy. Theodosius, who had fixed his head-quarters at some little distance from the scene of the battle, being sent for by Promotus to behold the fresh footprints of victory, when he gazed on the multitude of prisoners and the heap of spoils, set all the captives free from their bonds and comforted them with gifts and soothing words. To the Greuthungi of Odotheus he would pursue the same wise policy as to the Thervingi of Fritigern. Having once thoroughly beaten them and convinced them that Rome must be mistress, he would let them live, he would even accept their services. Most of the survivors of that terrible night—and notwithstanding the large words of the poet and historian, we are evidently not to suppose that all perished—became *foederati* of the Empire, and followed the standards of Theodosius in that civil war against the usurper Maximus, which will hereafter be described.

On the 12th of October, 386, Theodosius entered Constantinople in triumph, with his young son, Arcadius (who had now been for three years associated with him as Augustus), by his side. The captive, or the willingly subjected, Greuthungi graced his triumph, and (if this be not a poet's fancy) he deposited in the palace, as the old Roman kings used to deposit in the temple of Capitoline Jupiter, the *spolia opima* of their slain leader<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 'Confessusque parens Odothaei regis opima  
Rettulit exuviasque tibi.'

(Honorius is addressed: 'Claudian de IV Cons. Honorii, 632-3.')

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

The policy  
of Theodosius  
criticised  
by Zosimus.

Hitherto we have seen the more favourable side of the policy of Theodosius towards the barbarians, as it is represented to us by Themistius and the Chroniclers. But there is no doubt that it was often commented upon in a different spirit, especially by the heathen subjects of the Emperor and those who felt themselves called upon to uphold the military traditions of the people of Romulus. We are still able to trace some of these hostile comments in the pages of Zosimus, the persistent enemy of Theodosius, and the pitiless critic of all his policy. This part of his history is more than usually unsatisfactory, destitute of order and chronological arrangement, weak and gossiping, an anecdote-book rather than a history. Still, some even of these anecdotes are worth studying, for the illustrations which they afford of the temper of the times and the relations of Romans and barbarians to each other at the close of the fourth century.

§ 1. THE TUMULT AT PHILADELPHIA<sup>1</sup>.

The  
tumult  
at Philadelphia.

‘The Emperor Theodosius’ (says Zosimus, speaking apparently of the time immediately after his accession) ‘seeing the hopeless inferiority of his troops, gave leave to any of the barbarians beyond the Danube who were willing, to come to him, promising to enrol the deserters in the ranks of his army. Having received this offer, they came to him and were blended with his soldiers,

We get our chief details from Zosimus (iv. 35 and 38) who is somewhat confused and blunders as to the name and origin of the Greuthungi, besides telling the story twice over, but still gives us a spirited and valuable narrative. Claudian agrees with Zosimus in the main outlines of the history. We get the date of Theodosius’ triumphal entry from the *Fasti Idatiani*.

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, iv. 30.

secretly cherishing the thought that if they but outnumbered the Romans they could easily throw off their disguise and make themselves masters of the Empire. But when the Emperor saw that the number of the deserters exceeded that of his own soldiers in those parts, casting about for some means to keep them in check if they should try to break their bargain with him, he thought it best to transfer some of them to the legions then serving in Egypt, and to bring some of the soldiers in those legions to his own camp. In the marches and counter-marches which this transference rendered necessary, the Egyptians made their passage peaceably through the Empire, buying at a fair price all things that they had need of: but the barbarians marched in no order at all, and helped themselves in the markets to whatsoever they pleased. When the two bodies of troops met at the Lydian city of Philadelphia, the Egyptians, who were much inferior in number to the barbarians, observed all the rules of military discipline; but the latter were encouraged by their numerical superiority to put forward the most arrogant pretensions. When a stall-keeper in the market ventured to ask a barbarian to pay him for something which he had bought, the man drew his sword and wounded him, and so he did also to a neighbour, who, alarmed by his cries, came running to the stall-keeper's help. The Egyptians, who pitied the sufferers, exhorted the barbarians to refrain from such excesses, which were not becoming in men desirous to live according to the laws of Rome. Then they turned, and began to use their swords against them also, on which the Egyptians, losing all patience, fell upon the barbarians and slew more than two hundred

BOOK I. of them, some by blows of their swords, and the rest  
 CH. 5. by hunting them into the caves beneath the city<sup>1</sup>,  
 where they perished [of hunger]. After giving them  
 this lesson in good behaviour, and showing them that  
 there were some men left who would stand up for  
 the citizens against them, the Egyptians set forward  
 on their way and the barbarians marched to their  
 appointed *rendezvous* in Egypt, their commander being  
 Hormisdas the Persian, son of the Hormisdas who shared  
 the Emperor Julian's campaign in Persia.'

§ 2. NIGHT ATTACK BY THE BARBARIANS.  
 NARROW ESCAPE OF THEODOSIUS<sup>2</sup>.

Narrow  
 escape of  
 Theodo-  
 dosius.

'When these Egyptians arrived in Macedonia and  
 were enrolled in the cohorts there, no order was ob-  
 served in the camps, nor was there any discrimination  
 between Roman and barbarian, but all were jumbled up  
 confusedly together, no record being kept of those who  
 were enlisted in the several legions. Moreover the  
 deserters [from the barbarian service], when they were  
 now enrolled in the cohorts, were permitted to return  
 to their own country and send substitutes instead of  
 themselves, and then whensoever it pleased them, to  
 re-enlist in the Roman service. When the barbarians  
 saw such utter disorder prevailing in the Imperial

<sup>1</sup> Strabo speaks twice with great emphasis of the terrible earth-  
 quakes to which Philadelphia was liable, 'and modern travellers  
 describe the appearance of the country as resembling a billowy sea of  
 disintegrated lava, with here and there vast trap-dykes protruding'  
 (Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, s. v. Philadelphia).

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus, iv. 31. This event also seems to have occurred near the  
 beginning of the reign of Theodosius, perhaps before his illness at  
 Thessalonica, but I despair of fitting it into its precise chronological  
 position.



armies (for the deserters kept them informed of all that was going on, and there was perfect freedom of intercourse both ways) they thought their time had come for striking a blow at the State which was so negligently administered. Accordingly they crossed the river (Danube) without any trouble, and penetrated to Macedonia, for no one hindered them, and the deserters even facilitated their passage. Here they found that the Emperor had come to meet them with all his army, and as it was now the dead of night, observing one especially bright fire burning they conjectured that that fire marked the Emperor's quarters; a guess which was confirmed by the reports of the deserters who joined themselves to them. They therefore directed their course straight for the Emperor's tent, being guided by the bright watch-fire. As some of the deserters had joined them, only the Romans and the remainder of the deserters resisted their onset. These were few against many, and were barely able to cover the Emperor's flight, having done which, they all fell fighting like brave men, amid a vast multitude of slain foes. If then the barbarians had followed up their victory and pursued the Emperor and those who fled with him, they would at the first shout<sup>1</sup> have made themselves masters of everything. But, contented with their present victory, they overspread the undefended provinces of Macedonia and Thessaly, but spared the cities, doing no ungentle deed towards one of them, because they hoped that from them they should receive tribute.'

It will be seen that even in this narrative, penned by one who hated both Theodosius and his *foederati*, it is

<sup>1</sup> Πάντως αὐτοβοεῖ πάντων ἂν ἐκρατήσαν.



BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

admitted that some of the Goths who had enlisted in the Imperial service, died fighting bravely round the eagles, in order to facilitate the escape of the Augustus. The great services, already described, which the royal Goth, Modar, rendered to the cause of the Empire in the campaign of 379, are another phenomenon of the same kind. In fact, all things being considered, the fidelity of many of the barbarians (Goths, Franks, and even Huns) to Rome, when they had once accepted her *mizdon*<sup>1</sup>, is more extraordinary than their occasional treachery.

The next story illustrates the effect produced on the minds of the born subjects of the Empire by the favour shown to the new recruits. We may safely assume that the historian tells the tale in very much the same shape in which Gerontius himself would tell it to his discontented comrades.

### § 3. THE BRAVERY OF GERONTIUS AND ITS REWARD<sup>2</sup>.

Bravery of  
Gerontius.

‘At the Scythian town of Tomi (Ovid’s place of banishment, now Kustendje in Bulgaria, about sixty miles south of the Sulina mouth of the Danube), some Roman troops were stationed under the command of Gerontius, a man of great strength of body and skill in war. Outside the town was a detachment of barbarian auxiliaries, the very flower of their nation in courage and manly beauty. These men saw that Theodosius provided them with richer equipments and larger pay than he gave to the Roman soldiers inside the town, yet they repaid the favour, not with gratitude to the

<sup>1</sup> Soldier’s pay (= *μισθοίς*).

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus, iv. 40.

Emperor, but with arrogance towards Gerontius and unconcealed contempt for his men. Gerontius could not but see this, and suspected moreover that they intended to seize the town and throw everything into confusion. He consulted with those of his officers on whose judgment he placed most reliance, how to check this increasing wantonness and insolence of the auxiliaries. But when he found them all hanging back through cowardice, and dreading the slightest movement among the barbarians, he donned his armour, bid open the gates of the city, and with certain of his guards—a number that you could very soon have counted—rode forth and set himself against all that multitude. His own soldiers meanwhile were either asleep, or palsied with fear, or else running up to the battlements of the city to see what was about to happen. The barbarians sent up a great shout of laughter at the madness of Gerontius, and despatched some of their bravest against him, thinking to kill him out of hand. But he closed with the first who came, clutched hold of his shield, and fought on bravely till one of his guards with a sword lopped off the barbarian's shoulder (he could do no more, the two men's bodies were so closely intertwined) and dragged him down from off his horse. Then the barbarians began to be struck with awe at the splendid bravery of their foe, while Gerontius dashed forwards to fresh encounters; and at the same time the men who were looking on from the walls of the city, seeing the mighty deeds wrought by their commander, were stung with remembrance of the once great name of Rome, and rushing forth from the gates slew many of the barbarians, who were already panic-stricken and beginning to quit

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CH. 5.

their ranks. The rest of them took refuge in a building held sacred by the Christians and regarded as conferring immunity on fugitives. Gerontius, then, having by his magnificent courage freed Scythia<sup>1</sup> from the dangers impending over it, and obtained a complete mastery over the barbarians, naturally expected some recompense from his sovereign. But Theodosius being on the contrary deeply irritated by the slaughter of the warriors whom he so highly prized, peremptorily summoned Gerontius before him and required him to give a reason for his late conduct. The general pleaded the intended insurrection of the barbarians and their various acts of pillage and murder; but to all this the Emperor gave no heed, insisting that his true motives had been envy of the rich gifts bestowed on the auxiliaries, and a desire to have them put out of the way in order that his own robberies from them might be concealed. He alluded especially to some golden collars which had been given them by way of ornament. Gerontius proved that these, after the slaughter of the owners, had all been sent into the public treasury; yet, even so, he with difficulty escaped from the dangers which encompassed him, after spending all his property in bribes to the eunuchs about the court. And such were the worthy wages that he received for his zeal on behalf of Rome.'

#### § 4. A GOTHIC DEBATE.

The history of this debate belongs to the latest years of the reign of Theodosius, but is introduced here as

<sup>1</sup> The Roman province of Scythia, corresponding to the modern Dobrudscha.

illustrating the precarious tenure by which Rome held the services of her Gothic auxiliaries.

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

<sup>1</sup> When the news came of the probability of a second civil war [on the murder of Valentinian II and the usurpation of Eugenius], there arose a difference of opinion among the chiefs of the tribes whom Theodosius had at the commencement of his reign admitted to his friendship and brotherhood in arms, whom he had honoured with many gifts, and for whom he had provided a daily banquet in common in his palace. For some of the chiefs loudly asserted that it would be better to despise the oaths which they swore when they gave themselves up to the Roman power, and others insisted that they must on no account depart from their plighted faith<sup>2</sup>. The leader of the party who wished to trample on their oath of allegiance was Eriulph (or Priulph), while Fravitta (or Fraustius)<sup>3</sup> headed the loyal party. Long was this internal dissension concealed, but one day at the royal table after long potations they were so carried away with wrath that they openly manifested their discordant sentiments. The Emperor understanding what they were talking

A Gothic debate.

A national party headed by Eriulph.

A Romanizing party by Fravitta.

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, iv. 56 ; founded apparently on Eunapius (pp. 52-54, ed. Bonn), but modified from his version.

<sup>2</sup> According to Eunapius, one party advised that they should rest content with their present prosperity, the result of their league with the Romans, while the other insisted that they should revert to that attitude of eternal and unrelenting hostility to Rome, and determination to conquer her territory, to which they had bound themselves by solemn oaths while still in their own land.

<sup>3</sup> Probably Fra-veitands 'the Avenger.' Eunapius tells us that he was a man who truly held the Homeric sentiment—

'My soul abhors him as the gates of hell,  
Who dares think one thing and another tell,'

that he married a Roman wife and became just like a Roman.



BOOK I. about, broke up the party, but on their way home from  
 CH. 5. the palace the quarrel became so exasperated that Fravitta drew his sword and dealt Eriulph a mortal blow. Then the soldiers of the murdered man were about to rush upon Fravitta and kill him, but the Imperial guards interposed and prevented the dispute from going any further.'

In the midst of the conflicting accounts which have come down to us of the character of Theodosius, one fact can be clearly discerned, that he was bent upon reversing the fatal policy of Valens, and while he dealt severely with those barbarians whose only thought was plunder, he was determined to enlist all that was noblest and in the best sense of the word most Teutonic among them in the service of Rome. Engaged in this enterprise one may liken him to a far-seeing statesman, who, seeing an irresistible tide of democracy setting in and threatening to overwhelm the State, goes boldly forth to meet it, with liberal hand extends the privileges of citizenship to the worthiest of those who have been hitherto outside the pale, and from the enemies of the constitution turns them into its staunch defenders. Or he is like the theologian who, instead of attempting an useless defence of positions which have long since become untenable, questions the questioning spirit itself to discover how much of truth it too may possess, and seeks to turn even the turbulent armies of doubt into champions of the eternal and essential verities of faith.

Such, viewed on its intellectual side, was the policy of Theodosius towards the barbarians; and though it was a policy which led to complete and utter failure, it is not therefore to be condemned as necessarily unsound,



for had his own life been prolonged to the ordinary period, or had his sons possessed half his own courage and capacity, it is likely enough that his policy would have proved not a failure, but a success.

But probably another and less noble motive conduced to the very same course of action. His soldier's eye may have been pleased with the well-proportioned frames and noble stature of those children of the North. His pride as a sovereign may have been gratified by enlisting those fair-haired majestic Amali and Balti among his household guards, instead of the little, dark-featured, supple inhabitants of the lands bordering on the Mediterranean; and he may have indulged this fancy to the full, without considering the deep wound which he thus inflicted on what yet remained of Roman dignity by assigning these offices to foreigners, nor the heavy demands which he was obliged to make on an exhausted exchequer in order to provide the double pay, the daily banquets, the golden collars for his Gothic favourites.

Thus the acceptance of the services of the Goths connects itself with another subject, which will have to be referred to later on, the financial policy—or want of policy—of Theodosius.

BOOK I.  
CH. 5.

Defects of  
Theodo-  
sius's philo-  
Teutonic  
policy.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE VICTORY OF NICAËA <sup>1</sup>.

#### Authorities.

##### *Sources :—*

BOOK I. GREGORY NAZIANZEN (whose life is described in the following  
CH. 6. chapter). The two autobiographical poems of this father are full of interesting revelations of the temper of the times as well as of his own character.

##### *Guides :—*

Ullmann's Gregor von Nazianz, a very thorough and careful monograph, written from the point of view of German Protestant orthodoxy. H. M. Gwatkin's Studies of Arianism, a most helpful guide through the civil as well as the ecclesiastical history of this period.

WE have now to consider the effect of the sickness and baptism of Theodosius on the religious legislation of the Empire.

Religious  
legislation. The Sixteenth and last Book of the Theodosian Code is entirely occupied with legislation on religious affairs. The first 'Title' of that Book, 'Concerning the Catholic Faith,' begins with an edict of Valentinian (365) severely threatening any judge or minister of justice who should dare to impose upon men of the Christian religion the duty of guarding a heathen temple. After this check given to the officious zeal of

<sup>1</sup> Νίκαια νικῶσα.

some of Julian's friends who might still be endeavour-  
ing to carry on his hopeless attempt to turn back the  
tide of human enthusiasm into the old and dried-up  
channels of Paganism, the next decrees, those which  
may be considered the portals of the stately fabric of  
the Imperial-Church legislation, are two which bear the  
great name of Theodosius.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

The first, which was dated at Thessalonica on the  
27th of February in the first year of his Consulship  
(380), was probably signed soon after he had been  
baptized by Bishop Acholius, and when he was still  
lying in the chamber of sickness, where the Bishop had  
visited him. It is to the following effect:—

Acts of  
Uni-  
formity.

'An Edict of Theodosius, concerning the Catholic  
Faith, to the people of the city of Constantinople. We  
wish that all the nations who are subject to the rule of  
Our Clemency shall adhere to that religion which the  
divine Apostle Peter handed to the Romans (as is suffi-  
ciently shown by its existence among them to this day),  
and which it is obvious that Pope (Pontifex) Damasus  
follows, as well as Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, a man  
of apostolical holiness: namely, that *according to the  
apostolical discipline and the evangelical doctrine we  
believe the One Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
with equal majesty, in the Holy Trinity.* We order those  
who follow this law to assume the name of Catholic  
Christians: we pronounce all others to be mad and fool-  
ish, and we order that they shall bear the ignominious  
name of heretics, and shall not presume to bestow on  
their conventicles the title of churches: these are to be  
visited first by the divine vengeance, and secondarily  
by the stroke of our own authority, which we have  
received in accordance with the will of Heaven.'

380.  
(De Fide  
Catholicâ.)  
Codex  
Theodosi-  
anus, lib.  
xvi, tit. i. 2.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

The next edict bears date the 30th of July, 381, and carries into practical effect the principles announced seventeen months before :—

‘ We order that all churches be at once [*moæ*] handed over to those Bishops who confess the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, of one majesty and power, of the same glory and of one brightness, making no discord by profane division but [holding] the order of the Trinity, the assertion of the Persons, and the unity of the God-head: who shall prove that they are joined in communion with Nectarius the Bishop of the Church of Constantinople and with Timotheus, Bishop of the city of Alexandria in Egypt.’

Then follow the names of nine other orthodox prelates, chiefly in the dioceses of Asia Minor.

‘ And all those who shall be proved to be in communion with these men shall be entitled to be admitted to and to hold the Catholic Churches on the ground of their communion and fellowship with approved priests. But all those who dissent from the communion of the faith of those who have been here expressly mentioned, shall be expelled as manifest heretics from the Churches. Nor shall there hereafter be permitted to them any opportunity of obtaining the Pontifical office in the churches: in order that the ranks of the Priesthood may remain unpolluted in the true faith of Nicæa. Nor after this clear expression of our command shall any place be left for the cunning of malignity.’

The stiff and cumbrous phraseology of the Imperial edicts may hide from the reader the importance of the revolution effected by them. In order to understand their effect on the hearts of contemporary listeners, how by them triumph was turned into despair, and mourn-

ing into rejoicing, we will briefly review the fortunes of a man who at this time was brought into close contact with Theodosius and shared some of his most secret counsels, the famous Gregory Nazianzen.

Born at Nazianzus<sup>1</sup> (a little town of Cappadocia, on the banks of the river Halys), and the son of the Bishop of that place, who held the orthodox Nicene faith, Gregory, at an early age, set his heart on acquiring renown as a Christian orator. Having studied at Caesarea, in Palestine, and at Alexandria, he went, while still a youth, to Athens, and spent ten years at the university in that city. There was cemented his lifelong friendship with his fellow-countryman, Basil: and there he sat on the same benches with the young *Nobilissimus*, Julian, cousin of the Emperor Constantius, in whom Gregory even then discerned the germs of that alienation from Christianity which was one day to be made manifest to the world in the brilliant but blighted career of the great 'Apostate.'

Returning at the age of thirty to his Cappadocian home, Gregory was entreated by his father to undertake the duties of a priest, in the hope of thus eventually securing him as his coadjutor in the see of Nazianzus. Gregory was more attracted by the life of monastic contemplation which his friend Basil was leading in the neighbouring province of Pontus. He wavered, however, and it was apparently in one of his moments of wavering that his father ordained him, an almost involuntary priest. No sooner was the step taken than it was repented of, and instead of discharging his priestly functions at Nazianzus he betook himself again to his

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

Early life  
of Gregory  
Nazianzen.

<sup>1</sup> Probably about 325.



BOOK I. solitude in Pontus, thus earning the unconcealed dis-  
CH. 6. approval of his father and his friends.

Bishop of  
Sasima.

Eventually Gregory seems to have settled down at Nazianzus, living his life on the lines which his father had marked out for him; but in the year 372 came his consecration to the Episcopate. His elevation to this dignity was marked by the same conflict between his own and the stronger natures round him, perhaps we might say the two opposing tendencies, the speculative and the practical, in his own nature, which had marred his acceptance of the priestly functions. His friend Basil was by this time a Bishop, having been elected, partly through the influence of Gregory and his father, Metropolitan of the Cappadocian Caesarea. Owing to a division, for civil purposes, of the province of Cappadocia into two parts, Prima and Secunda, Basil found his claims as Metropolitan of the whole province contested by those of the Bishop of Tyana, the capital of the new province of Cappadocia Secunda. In order to carry on successfully the spiritual campaign it was important for Basil to secure an adherent in the enemy's territory, and he accordingly decided to plant a bishopric at the little town of Sasima, and to consecrate his friend Gregory as its first Bishop. In this measure Gregory's father concurred, and though he afterwards bitterly repented of the step, it is difficult to suppose that Gregory himself at the time refused his consent. Sasima was a *mansio*<sup>1</sup> on the high-road from Angora to Tarsus, and as it was only twenty-four Roman miles from Nazianzus, Gregory must have known

<sup>1</sup> Lodging-place. There were generally about two *mutationes* (post-stations) to each *mansio* (which marked the end of an ordinary day's journey).

perfectly well the character of the place from which he was to take his episcopal title. Here, however, is the description—doubtless the too depreciatory description—which he gives of it when he is reviewing the mistakes and failures of his life:—

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

‘There is a posting-place for travellers planned  
Where three ways meet, in Cappadocian land.  
This squalid hamlet is the home of slaves,  
No spring refreshes it, no foliage waves.  
There ever dust, and the car’s rattle reigns,  
Wails, groans, the exactor’s shout, the clank of chains.  
Its people—strangers who benighted roam :  
And this was Sasima, my Church, my home.  
This in his goodness had to me assigned  
The Lord of fifty Bishops : wondrous kind !  
To this new see, this fort must I repair  
That I might fight my patron’s battle there<sup>1</sup>’

Bitter as is the lamentation, we are almost ready to forgive the poet the querulousness of his temper for the sake of the vivid picture which he has preserved for us of a village on one of the great highways of the empire, its inhabitants so harassed by the demands of the officers of the *cursus publicus*, so impoverished by *angaria*<sup>2</sup>, so constantly called upon to furnish *paraveredarii*<sup>3</sup> for governors proceeding to their provinces, or Bishops returning from their synods, that their condition was practically little better than that of slaves<sup>4</sup>.

What made the sacrifice that was asked for at his hands all the more painful was that Gregory was under

<sup>1</sup> Carmen xi. 439-450.

<sup>2</sup> Angaria=services on the road.

<sup>3</sup> Paraveredarii=extra post-horses.

<sup>4</sup> Gregory says (u. s. 441) that Sasima was

ἄνδρος, ἄχλους, οὐδ’ ὅλως ἐλεύθερος.

I think this means more than the ‘nihil habens liberale’ by which the Latin translator has rendered it.

BOOK I. no illusion as to the meanness of the strife in which he  
CH. 6. was expected to engage:—

‘Souls were the pretext: but I grieve to say  
The love of rule it was that caused the fray.  
This and the vulgar claims for tax and toll  
That o’er the wide world vex the weary soul.’

Such was the profound disgust with which Sasima inspired its new Bishop that he apparently never attempted to discharge the obligations which he had assumed. After a very short residence, if indeed he ever resided there at all, we find him back at Nazianzus, where the increasing weakness of his father excused the helpful presence of a coadjutor. Two years after his consecration to the see of Sasima, both Gregory’s parents died. It seems that it was the general wish that the son should succeed the father, and that the canonical difficulty arising from his being already wedded to the see of Sasima would have been in some way surmounted. But again that strange irresolution, that attitude of ‘he would and he would not’ which is so characteristic of this father of the Church, displayed itself. He refused to be consecrated Bishop of Nazianzus, yet lingered on at that place of which he had now been for several years virtual Bishop. He declares that he performed no episcopal function, laid his hands on no priests’ head, nor even prayed publicly in the Church. But Basil refused to consecrate any other Bishop, hoping always that his reluctance to accept the office might be overcome, and Gregory, to show that this was impossible, made another retreat, this time to the monastery of Saint Thekla, at Seleucus.

And now at length, after the death of Basil, and seven years after his own consecration to the see of Sasima,

another prospect opened before him, one which appealed to all the higher and lower motives of his nature, to his enthusiastic zeal for the doctrine of the Trinity, and to his personal vanity: to his desire to stir great masses of men by his persuasive eloquence, and to his disgust with the dullness of Cappadocia. The thought suggested itself—or, as he believed, was suggested to him by the Spirit of God—that he should go to the capital and undertake the oversight of the little flock of adherents of the Nicene theology, which still remained in Arian Constantinople. The proposition had perhaps been originally made to him by some of the leaders of the Trinitarian party: it was at any rate warmly approved by them, and to Constantinople he accordingly departed<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.  
379.

The religious condition of the New Rome, the great city of the East, was at this time a most peculiar one. Heathenism had far less hold here than in the Old Rome by the Tiber: we may perhaps say that it had less hold than in any other city of the Empire. Christianity of one kind or another was the fashionable religion; but it was, and remained for long, whether it assumed the garb of orthodoxy or heterodoxy, a Christianity of the vain, disputatious, shallow kind, doing little to purify the lives of its professors, and making little response to the deep spiritual yearnings of humanity as expressed either in preceding or succeeding ages. For a generation and a half Arianism had been the dominant creed in court and camp and council-chamber, and Arians accordingly the majority of the citizens of Constantinople proclaimed themselves, looking down upon those who held fast to the Nicene Creed as

Religious  
condition of  
Constanti-  
nople.

<sup>1</sup> He appears to have arrived in Constantinople early in 379.

BOOK I. heretics. But in addition to the professors of Arianism  
CH. 6.

—themselves divided into Homoeusians, Homoeans, Anomoeans<sup>1</sup>—there were the partisans almost of every strange opinion concerning the Godhead that the brooding spirit of the East had given birth to. Manicheans, who solved the riddle of the universe by proclaiming it to be the work of two equally strong co-enduring powers, Good and Evil: Gnostics, who worshipped Depth and eternal Silence and a wonderful family of Aeons, half male, half female in their attributes: men who believed in the magical efficacy of the letters composing the mystical name of God: men who derived the Old Testament and the New from two deeply opposed and hostile powers—the Puritan Novatian, the ecstatic Montanist—all were mingled in this great

<sup>1</sup> The following table exhibits the chief types of orthodox and heterodox opinion at the time with which we are engaged:—

<i>Name of Sect.</i>	<i>Battle-cry.</i>	<i>Chief Champions.</i>	<i>Imperial Patrons.</i>
Homo-usians.	'The Son is of one Substance with the Father.'	Athanasius. Basil of Caesarea. Gregory Nazianzen.	Gratian and Theodosius.
Homoe-usians or Semi-Arians.	'The Son is of like Substance with the Father.'	Eustathius of Sebaste. Basil of Ancyra.	Constantius.
Homoeans.	'The Son is like unto the Father in such manner as the Scriptures declare.' The terms 'Essence' and 'Substance' ( <i>οὐσία</i> and <i>ὕποστασις</i> ) ought not to be used in speaking of the Godhead.	Acacius of Caesarea. Eudoxius of Constantinople. Ulphilas.	Valens.
Anomoeans.	'The Son is unlike the Father and of a different Substance.'	Aetius, deacon, of Antioch. Eunomius of Cyzicus.	Gallus (for a short time: but as a rule this doctrine was disavowed even by the Arian Emperors).



tide of humanity which swayed to and fro, wrangling, disputing, bargaining by the shores of the Bosphorus<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

Against all these opponents of the orthodox faith and against the Apollinarians who, though they accepted the Nicene Creed, were by their too daring speculations on the union of the Human and the Divine in the person of Christ, preparing the way for the long and terrible Monophysite controversy of the next century, Gregory waged earnest and eloquent, but not bitter war. He began to preach in the house of a relation (the Arians having still possession of every basilica in Constantinople), and the church which grew out of this little conventicle received the name of Anastasia, a name which to the minds of Gregory and his hearers fittingly expressed the resurrection of the true doctrine of the Trinity after its long apparent death during the Arian ascendancy. From the accounts which are given us of the multitudes that flocked to Gregory's preaching, we may perhaps infer that large additions were made to the single house which had at first received him. Later on the Emperor Theodosius erected there a magnificent basilica which was adorned with beautiful marbles. The Mosque of Mehmed Pasha on the south-west of the Hippodrome, and overlooking the sea of Marmora, still marks the site of this church of the Resurrection, where Gregory with rapt face expounded the mysteries of the Trinity, and where, a hundred years later, the Scriptures were read

Gregory's  
preaching  
at the  
Church of  
Anastasia.

<sup>1</sup> This description of the religious atmosphere of Constantinople is chiefly taken from Gregory (loc. cit. 1153-1185). He thus portrays the Gnostics—

Οἱ τὸν Βυθὸν Σιγὴν τε προχρόνους φύσεις  
Τιμῶντες, Αἰῶνάς τε τοὺς θηλάσενας  
Σίμωνος υἱοὶ τοῦ μάγου.

BOOK I. in the Gothic tongue, in order to keep alive the memory  
 CH. 6. of Aspar and Ardaburius, Gothic embellishers of the  
 sacred building<sup>1</sup>.

379. The intense earnestness with which Gregory pleaded for the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine which was to him no philosophical abstraction but the centre of all his spiritual life<sup>2</sup>, joined to his great and undoubted oratorical gifts, obtained for him an enthusiastic and an increasing band of adherents, but he also met with much and bitter opposition. He himself tells us that his previous training and his personal appearance were against him. His life, which had been spent for the most part among the rustics of Cappadocia<sup>3</sup>, had but little prepared him to face the scrutiny of the delicate aristocrats of Constantinople :—

‘For “that the poorest of the poor,” said they  
 Wrinkled, with downcast look and mean array,  
 Whose fasts, and tears, and fears had left their trace  
 Deeply on what was ne’er a comely face,  
 A wandering exile from earth’s darkest nook  
 That such should rule, no well-born souls could brook<sup>4</sup>.’

The lower classes of the capital were easily roused by the cry that the Cappadocian was bringing back

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Paspatis’s *Βυζαντινὰ Μελετή*, p. 369. The identification of ‘Mehmed Pasha Djemi’ with St. Anastasia is due to Dr. Paspatis, who discovered in the Mosque traces of a Christian origin, which he refers to the eighth century.

<sup>2</sup> One cannot fail to be struck with the frequent references to the Trinity, even in the autobiographical part of Gregory’s poems. He speaks of *ἡ Τριάς* in a tone of personal affection, and with a familiarity which perhaps sometimes borders on irreverence. His language in this respect differs much from that of ordinary orthodox Christians of later ages.

<sup>3</sup> Carm. xi. 594, *καίπερ δὲ ζήσαντες ἀγροικὸν βίον*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 696–702.

the many gods of heathenism, so completely had the doctrines of Nicaea faded from the popular memory during the long ascendancy of Arianism<sup>1</sup>. He was stoned by the rabble in the streets ('Would that those stones had not missed their mark!' wrote he afterwards in the bitterness of his spirit), and he was dragged 'like a murderer' before the tribunal of the Prefect. But however dangerous the fury of the mob might be, if they gave chase to a Trinitarian in the streets of Constantinople, from the legal tribunals he had nothing to fear. Six months at least had passed since the last Arian Emperor had fallen on the field of Hadrianople, and though Theodosius, the new Augustus of the East, had not yet received baptism at the hands of the Trinitarian Acholius, enough doubtless was conjectured as to his bias, and enough was known as to the bias of his young colleague, Gratian, in favour of the creed of Nicaea, to make a judicious Praetorian Prefect hesitate before he put in force any of the anti-Nicene decrees of Valens which might perchance be slumbering in the statute-book<sup>2</sup>.

But though little molested by the officials at Constantinople, Gregory was sorely troubled by dissensions and rivalry in the Church of Anastasia itself. The

<sup>1</sup> Πρώτον μὲν ἐξεζέσε καθ' ἡμῶν ἡ πόλις  
 ὡς εἰσαγόντων ἀνθ' ἐνὸς πλείους θεούς,  
 θαυμαστὸν οὐδέν' ἦσαν οὕτως ἡγμενοί  
 ὡστ' ἀγνοεῖν παντάπασιν εὐσεβῆ λόγον  
 Πῶς ἡ Μονὰς τριάζεθ', ἡ Τριάς πάλιν  
 ἐνίστη, ἀμφοῖν ἐνθεως νοουμένη. (Carm. xi. 654-659.)

<sup>2</sup> I speak hypothetically about these edicts of Valens against the orthodox. Some such there must surely have been, at any rate, issued after the death of Valentinian, but as far as I know they have left no trace in the Theodosian Code.

BOOK I. consecration of Maximus the Cynic as Orthodox Bishop  
 CH. 6. of Constantinople was an event which filled Gregory's  
 379. soul with bitterness and to which he devotes three  
 hundred passionate lines in the poem of his life; but  
 we may pass lightly over it, as no principle of any  
 kind was involved in the contest.

Maximus  
 the Cynic.

About the same time when Gregory himself arrived in Constantinople, there appeared there another visitor, from Egypt; a man whose long hair, hanging down in curls over his shoulders, and whose staff carried in his hand proclaimed him a Cynic philosopher. This was Maximus, a Cynic still according to his own profession, but also an adherent of Christianity and of the Nicene form of that faith, one who had written well against the Arians and who—so he said—had suffered four years' banishment to an oasis in the Egyptian desert for his faith. This man professed and perhaps felt keen admiration for the great oratorical gifts of Gregory, and he was repaid by an elaborate oration in his praise pronounced before the congregation of Anastasia<sup>1</sup>. At this time Gregory took the cynic-saint at his own valuation, and found his rhetorical vocabulary all too small to describe the union of religion and philosophy in the mind of the Egyptian convert, or to paint the exile, the stripes, the ignominy which he had endured for the faith of Christ. At a later time, when the ambition of Maximus had collided with his own, his vocabulary of abuse was even more severely taxed to describe the vices of his rival. The exile and the

<sup>1</sup> It appears to be generally admitted that Gregory's 'Oratio in Laudem Heronis Philosophi' was (as St. Jerome tells us) originally pronounced in praise of Maximus, and that its title was altered by copyists, jealous for the saint's consistency.

stripes, he hinted, had been the punishment of vulgar crimes. Maximus was so destitute of literary culture that it was nothing less than impudence for him to presume to write verses. He understood as much about oratory as a donkey understands of playing the lyre, or fishes of driving a chariot; whereas Gregory himself, whom he would provoke to a literary encounter, could no more help writing eloquently than water can help flowing or fire burning<sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.  
379.

Above all, however—and the emphasis laid on this offence makes us doubt the reality of the graver charges—Maximus made himself odious by wearing his hair long. It was partly golden-coloured, partly black (probably like the dandies of the period he dyed it, not with entire success, in imitation of the yellow hair of the Goths); it was curly; old and new fashions were combined in the dressing of it; it was tied up into a round knot<sup>2</sup> like a woman's; and so on, through many an angry line, runs the invective of the elderly rustic who saw this 'curled darling' stealing into the hearts of his female votaries, and silently supplanting him in his hardly-earned throne<sup>3</sup>.

In all this we greatly miss the calm summing up of an impartial judge. The career of Maximus was a strange one, and the proceedings which have next to be related with reference to his consecration were undoubtedly irregular; but there seems no reason to think that he was guilty of disgraceful crimes, and he was apparently a man of sufficient eminence as a

<sup>1</sup> Carm. xli. (ed. Migne), *Adversus Maximum*, 44-45, 54-56.

<sup>2</sup> Σισόη, the word used in the Septuagint translation of Leviticus xix. 27 ('Ye shall not round the corners of your heads').

<sup>3</sup> Carm. xi. 751-772; xli. 49-51 (as to Maximus' popularity with the females of the congregation).



BOOK I. philosopher to cause his accession to the ranks of the  
 CH. 6. orthodox to be considered a valuable conquest by  
 379. others beside the preacher of Anastasia.

Maximus  
 conse-  
 crated  
 Bishop.

In the year 379, while Gregory was confined to his house by illness, a mob of Egyptian sailors (says Gregory), hired for the purpose by a priest of Thasos, who had come to Constantinople to buy marble from Proconnesus for his church, rushed a little before dawn into the church of Anastasia<sup>1</sup>. They seated Maximus in the marble chair of the Bishop and began to intone the service of Consecration. Other ecclesiastics were with them beside the marble-seeking priest from Thasos, and all alleged that they were acting in accordance with a mandate received from Peter, Bishop of Alexandria. Already Alexandria, as the most important Church of the East, was claiming to exercise that right of interference in the ecclesiastical affairs of Constantinople which was so grievously to trouble the peace of the Church in the following century.

But day dawned, and the rite of consecration was not ended. Even the necessary tonsure was not completed, when the faithful adherents of Gregory, having learned what was doing, came pouring into the church and found the Cynic, with half his curls still untouched by the shears, sitting in the marble chair. To escape the wrath of the shouting multitude, the Egyptians glided from the church into the adjoining house of a band-master, and there cut off the remaining curls and completed the consecration of their new Bishop.

<sup>1</sup> I think we must suppose that the consecration of Maximus took place in the only church at Constantinople possessed by the Nicenes. To have intruded into St. Sophia, Demophilus still ruling there, would have been surely impossible.

These events must have occurred in the summer of 379, and it was probably in the autumn of that year that Maximus, finding the tide of popular opinion running strongly against him, sought the camp of Theodosius and entreated his help to secure for him the episcopal throne of Constantinople. Let the Bishop's Muse, seated on her ambling pad, tell what followed:—

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

379.

Gregory in  
presence  
of Theo-  
dosius.

'But when the Eastern Caesar, brooding ill  
For the barbarian tribes who roamed at will,  
Mustered in Macedonia his array,  
What does this vilest dog<sup>1</sup>? Attend, I pray;  
Gathering the refuse of the Egyptian crowd,  
(Those 'neath whose shears his yellow ringlets bowed)  
He hastens to the camp with nimble feet  
By royal edict to reclaim his seat.  
Ejected thence by Caesar's anger dread  
With fearful implications on his head<sup>2</sup>,  
(For Theodosius still to me was kind,  
And none had poisoned yet the Imperial mind),  
The pestilential creature seeks once more  
(His wisest course) the Alexandrian shore;  
For Peter played throughout a double game,  
A facile promiser, to each the same.'

If Constantinople could not be persuaded to own him as Bishop, Maximus insisted that Peter should abdicate for him his own see of Alexandria. This modest request was refused, nor when Peter soon after died—Feb., 380. perhaps his death may have been hastened by the shame and annoyance of the affair of Maximus—did the Cynic succeed in obtaining the vacant throne. His further movements need not be recorded. He went to

<sup>1</sup> As Maximus professed himself a Cynic, Gregory is within his rights in calling him 'dog,' but he perhaps avails himself of the privilege too freely.

<sup>2</sup> *Κακίθεν αὐθις, ὡς κύων, ἀπορρίφεις*  
*Ὅργῃ τε πολλῇ καὶ ὄρκους φρικώδεσι.* (Carm. xl. 1009-1010.)

BOOK I. Italy; he succeeded in enlisting in his cause the Italian  
CH. 6. Bishops with the great Ambrose at their head; but his election was pronounced utterly invalid by the council of Constantinople, and he soon disappears from history. A strange and presumptuous man doubtless, but perhaps hardly deserving of all the contempt which has been poured upon him, the usual portion of unsuccessful pretenders to thrones civil or ecclesiastical.

The glimpse which we have obtained of Theodosius driving the Cynic aspirant from his presence with anger and curses, shows us already the tendency to outbursts of passion in the florid full-habited Augustus, which was to lead to such a terrible result in the later years of his reign. To Gregory the affair of Maximus brought deep humiliation and keen annoyance, humiliation that he had so imperfectly understood the character of the man whom he had taken into his confidence, annoyance that any considerable number of the orthodox believers at Constantinople should put the dandy-philosopher's claims to spiritual authority in comparison with his own. He desired—or told himself that he desired—to abdicate his doubtful position at Constantinople, and preached a sermon in which he exhorted his congregation to hold fast the doctrine of the Trinity which he had taught, and not to forget his labours among them. The note of farewell which sounded in the sermon was perceived by his flock; and the response, we may perhaps say the desired response, broke forth. 'There was a stir like the hum of bees disturbed in their hive. Men and women, youths and maidens, old men and boys, gentle and simple, magistrates and soldiers on furlough, were all stirred by the same passions of anger and regret, regret at the thought

of losing their pastor, anger at the machinations which were driving him from among them.' They implored him not to desert his Anastasia, 'most precious of temples, the Ark of Noah which had alone escaped from the Deluge, and which bore in its bosom the seeds of a regenerated world of orthodoxy.' Still Gregory, as he tells us, hesitated, but at length a voice was heard from the congregation, 'Father! in banishing thyself thou art banishing also the Trinity,' and that voice decided him to remain.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.  
380.

Thus passed the year 380, the year of the illness of Theodosius and of his long residence at Thessalonica, of Gratian's campaign and of the final ratification of the *foedus* with the Goths. And now, by the labours of Gregory in the Church, by the strategy of Theodosius in the mountain passes of the Balkans, by his and Gratian's policy in the Gothic army-meetings, all was prepared for the Emperor's triumphal entry into his capital, which took place on the 24th<sup>1</sup> of November, 380.

Triumphal  
entry of  
Theodosius  
into Con-  
stanti-  
nople.

One of the earliest acts of Theodosius was to summon Demophilus the Arian Bishop of Constantinople to his presence, and ask if he were willing to subscribe to the Nicene Creed and thus restore the peace of the Church. Demophilus, a man apparently of respectable character though not of brilliant abilities, who had for ten years sat in the episcopal chair of Constantinople, teaching

26 Nov.,  
380.

<sup>1</sup> This is the day of the month given by Socrates (v. 6) and the Paschal Chronicle (s. a. 378), and it agrees with the Theodosian Code, which makes Theodosius still at Thessalonica on the 16th November. Clinton is therefore justified in preferring it to the 14th November, the date given by the 'Descriptio Consulium Idatio Episcopo adscripta,' s. a. 380.



BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

380.

the doctrines of a moderate Arianism, refused even at the bidding of an Emperor to renounce the profession of a lifetime<sup>1</sup>. 'Then,' said Theodosius, 'since you reject peace and unanimity, I order you to quit the churches.' Demophilus left the Imperial presence, and calling together his adherents in the Cathedral thus addressed them, 'Brethren, it is written in the Gospel, "if they persecute you in one city flee ye to another." The Emperor excludes us from our churches: take notice therefore that we will henceforth hold our assemblies without the city.'

The Arians  
expelled  
from the  
churches.

'Thus then,' says the ecclesiastical historian with beautiful simplicity, 'the Arians, after having been in possession of the churches for forty years, were, *in consequence of their opposition to the conciliatory measures of the Emperor Theodosius*, driven out of the city in Gratian's fifth consulate, and the first of Theodosius [380] on the 26th of November. The professors of the Homo-usian faith in like manner regained possession of the churches<sup>2</sup>.'

The Arians, henceforward a proscribed and persecuted sect, meeting outside the walls of Constantinople, were known by the contemptuous name of

<sup>1</sup> Gwatkin (*Studies of Arianism*, 256) says that 'the blunders of Demophilus did almost as much harm to the Homoeans as the profanity of Eudoxius.' Is not this to attach too much importance to the criticism of Philostorgius (ix. 14, and *Frag. apud Suid.*), who after all seems chiefly dissatisfied with Demophilus because he is not Arian enough for him? His conduct at Cyzicus seems to show that he was a moderate man.

<sup>2</sup> Socrates, v. 7. Marcellinus Comes (s. a. 380) makes a restitution of the Churches '*Nostris Catholicis*' to have taken place in the month of December. But that is not inconsistent with the statement that a beginning was made with Demophilus and the Cathedral Church on the 26th November.



Exo-cionitæ, because they met outside the pillar (κίων) which marked the extreme westward limit of the city <sup>1</sup>. BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

At this point Gregory shall resume the narrative, as <sup>380.</sup> the glimpse which he affords us of the character of Theodosius described by Gregory. Theodosius when seen from an orthodox point of view is too precious to be lost:—

‘In this position did my fortunes stand  
When came the tidings “Caesar is at hand ;”  
From Macedon he came, where he the cloud  
Of Goths had scattered, menacing and proud.  
A man not evil is he, one whose rule  
The simple-minded for the faith may school ;  
A loyal servant of the One in Three,  
So says my heart: and with its voice agree  
All who hold fast Nicaea’s great decree.  
Yet zeal is not in him nor purpose high  
To compensate the wrongs of years gone by  
With answering sternness, nor the ruins raise  
Wrought by the Emperors of earlier days.  
Or was there zeal enough, but lacked he still  
Courage? or rashness? Answer it, who will.  
Haply ’twere better take a kindlier tone  
And say, the Prince’s *forethought* here was shown.  
For of a truth persuasion and not force  
For us and ours I hold the worthier course.  
Since thus we lead the converts’ souls to God,  
Not sway their conscience by the Sovereign’s nod.  
The tight-bent bow springs back. If dams restrain  
The prisoned stream ’twill one day flood the plain,  
E’en so a faith constrained will lose its sway:  
A faith enwrought lasts till Life’s latest day<sup>2</sup>’

Theodosius has not by the verdict of history been found guilty of too tender a regard for liberty of conscience in his subjects. Gregory, who here blames him

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chronicon Paschale, s. a. 379 [380], Θεοδοσίος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἔδωκε τὰς ἐκκλησίας τοῖς ὀρθοδόξοις, πανταχοῦ ποιήσας σάκρας καὶ διώξας ἐξ αὐτῶν τοὺς λεγόμενους Ἀρειανούς Ἐξωκιονίτας.

<sup>2</sup> Carm. i. 11. 1278–1300.

BOOK I. for his lukewarmness, was certainly, whatever his other  
 CH. 6. faults, one of the most tolerant ecclesiastics of the age,  
 380. and even these lines reveal the divided councils of his  
 own spirit on the subject of religious toleration. But  
 that Gregory was even inclined to call Theodosius half-  
 hearted is a valuable indication of the direction in  
 which the stream of public opinion was flowing in that  
 age, a direction exactly opposite to that in which it has  
 been flowing with us since the days of Locke.

Church of  
 the Twelve  
 Apostles.

Demophilus being cast out from his basilica, the next  
 thing was to enthrone Gregory. The Cathedral Church  
 of these days was not the magnificent temple of the  
 Divine Wisdom, the St. Sophia of Justinian and An-  
 themius : but it was the Church of the Twelve Apostles,  
 the Westminster Abbey of Constantinople, where all  
 the Eastern Emperors were buried, and where a year  
 later Theodosius was solemnly to entomb his predecessor  
 Valentinian. This great Church rose upon the fourth  
 hill of Constantinople, overlooking both the Golden  
 Horn, and the Sea of Marmora ; but now no vestige of  
 it is left ; for there Mohammed the Conqueror exercised  
 the right which only conquering Sultans may justly  
 claim, the right of building a mosque and calling it  
 after his name. In the spacious courtyard adjoining it  
 are the gushing fountains required for the ablutions of  
 Mohammedan worshippers : within is the tomb of the  
 victorious Sultan covered with tawdry ornaments, and  
 by the gate is inscribed in letters of gold on a tablet of  
 lapis lazuli the prediction of the Prophet. ' They will  
 capture Constantinople. Happy the prince, happy the  
 army which shall accomplish this.' Everything about  
 the place now tells of the conquering sons of Ishmael,  
 nothing of the *Heröon* in which the Caesars of New

Rome once lay in glory. Yet for this not so much the Mussulman as the Christian must bear the blame, for the spoliation of the Imperial tombs took place, not when Mohammed stormed the city, but two hundred and fifty years before, when the warriors of the Fourth Crusade committed the stupendous blunder and crime of the capture of Constantinople.

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When Theodosius, who at this time had only kind looks and words for Gregory, said to him, 'God, through my hands, will give you the cathedral as a reward for your toils,' the heart of the new Bishop sank within him as he thought of the serried ranks of the Arians that would have to be beaten down before such a consummation could be attained. However he took courage in remembering the sufferings of Christ, which he might be called upon to share if he should fall into the hands of the multitude.

The appointed day dawned. The cathedral and all the approaches to it were lined with soldiers; but the streets were thronged by a mob of excited and angry citizens. At the windows of the second and third stories their faces were seen; they filled the roads, the square, the hippodrome. Men and women, grey beards and little children were there, all thrilled with sorrow and indignation. Passionate prayers were put up to the Emperor that he would even yet desist from his design; passionate threats were addressed to Gregory as to the vengeance that would descend on his head. The appearance of Constantinople, he himself tells us, was like that of a city taken by the enemy. And yet the Emperor, who dared all this for the sake of the creed of Nicaea, was accused of lukewarmness in its service.

The day  
of the  
Enthronement.

The procession moved towards the cathedral. Gregory,

A a 2

BOOK I. weak and suffering from his recent sickness, walked  
CH. 6. between the Emperor and his soldiers. A dark cloud  
380. hung over the city, and seemed, to the excited imaginations of the people, to denote the divine displeasure at the deed which was that day to be accomplished. But no sooner had the procession entered the church and reached the railings which separated the nave from the choir, than the clouds disappeared and a blaze of sunlight filled all the place. The *Te Deum* was intoned at the same moment: triumphant shouts drowned the angry murmurs of the crowd without: hands were waved in pious exultation. Joy and gladness shone in the countenances of the orthodox believers, a moment ago depressed and mournful: and it seemed to all that the glory of the Lord filled the house as it did the tabernacle of old.

Such were the scenes which marked the return of the Church of Constantinople to that Nicene form of the faith which was thereafter dominant throughout Christendom. Many a conflict was to arise on other points of doctrine between the Old Rome and the New, but to the creed of Nicaea both cities remained steadfast till at Constantinople all Christian creeds went down before the war-cry of Allah and the Prophet.

To Gregory, the day, so much dreaded, of the procession to the cathedral, proved the one supreme day of joy and triumph in a life of disappointment and apparent failure. After the singing of the *Te Deum* and the outburst of sunlight kindling the mosaic faces of the Apostles in the church which was dedicated to their honour, there arose from the congregation a sound which seemed like the roar of thunder, but in which articulate words were audible. Grave officials in the



body of the church, excited women in the gallery on high<sup>1</sup>, joined in the earnest cry addressed to the Emperor, 'Thou has given us back the Church. Give us also Gregory for our Bishop.' So loud and so importunate were the voices that some reply must be promptly made to them; but Gregory, unnerved by the rapid alternations of fear and triumph on that day, distrusted his own powers of utterance. At his request a neighbouring presbyter arose and said: 'Cease your clamour. For the present we have only to think of thanksgiving<sup>2</sup>. Hereafter we shall see greater things than these.'

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From this time, however, there seems, from Gregory's own narrative, to have been a slight but steady decline in the favour with which he was regarded by Theodosius. He attributes it, himself, to his lack of sedulous and obsequious attendance at Court. 'Let others,' he says, 'crouch before the frown of power, let them cultivate the favour of chamberlains who show themselves men only in their lust for gold, let them lie down before the doors of royalty, let them use the glib tongue of the informer, let them open the hand of the beggar, let them take their very piety to market and sell it for a price. I have practised none of these arts, and will leave the doors of princes to those who like to haunt them.' These are noble and manly thoughts, but they were partly suggested to the Cappadocian bishop by that 'rusticity' of which he was himself fully conscious, and which made him no congenial companion

Decline of  
Gregory's  
influence  
at Court.

<sup>1</sup> Ταῦτ' ἐκ γυναικῶν ἐψόθεν βοώμενα.

<sup>2</sup> Or may he mean 'We have now to celebrate the Eucharist'?

Καὶρὸς γὰρ ἐστὶ πάντως εὐχαριστίας

'Ο νῦν ὁ δ' εἰσέπειτα καὶ τῶν μεγάλων.



BOOK I. of prefects and chamberlains. But besides this, Theo-  
 CH. 6. dosius, who was a good judge of character, had probably  
 381. discovered, as Basil had, in this fervent, impulsive, sensi-  
 tive nature, an absence of those gifts which are required  
 in him who would bear rule among men. Gregory's  
 was essentially the oratorical temperament: and the  
 men who are born to rule are generally men of silence.

Council of  
 Constanti-  
 nople.

Gregory's fall from power was hastened by an event  
 which seemed at first to add lustre to his office, the  
 Convocation of a general Council at Constantinople.  
 This assembly, which has almost by accident obtained  
 the second place among the great Councils of Chris-  
 tendom, was summoned by Theodosius in May 381. Its  
 composition did not entitle it to the name of Ecu-  
 menical<sup>1</sup>, for it consisted of 150 Bishops, drawn entirely  
 from the eastern portion of the empire. It had, however,  
 the glory of closing, practically, the Arian controversy,  
 which for fifty years had distracted Christendom. It  
 formulated no new creed: there had been enough and  
 too many of these published at the endless councils  
 assembled by Constantius and Valens. It did not even,  
 as is generally stated, republish the creed of Nicaea  
 with those additions concerning the Holy Spirit which  
 now appear in the Latin and Anglican liturgies<sup>2</sup>. But  
 it re-affirmed that creed as the authoritative exposition  
 of the faith of the Church, and by anathematising the  
 doctrines of the various schools of its opponents from  
 the Anomoeans up to the Semi-Arians, it secured victory  
 to those champions who, through good report and evil  
 report, had followed the flag borne aloft by Athanasius,

<sup>1</sup> Representing the whole inhabited world.

<sup>2</sup> See Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, 262, n. 1, as to the 'Two Dissertations' of Dr. Hort.

and after his death by Basil and Gregory. It further declared that henceforward the See of Constantinople, the New Rome, was to take precedence after that of Rome itself, thus settling theoretically a dispute between Constantinople and other Eastern patriarchates, which was not practically to be terminated for more than a century.

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As to all the proceedings connected with the consecration of Maximus the Cynic, 'and the disorder introduced by him into the Church of Constantinople,' the Council declared that he neither was nor ever had been Bishop, and that all ordinations performed by him were invalid.

So far all the legislative acts of the Council had been distinctly in Gregory's favour: but besides this it took the further, administrative, step of formally installing Gregory in the Episcopal throne of Constantinople. He resisted, he tells us, even with shouts and lamentations, but yielded eventually, hoping that he might be the means of restoring peace to the distracted Church. The solemn consecration was performed by the venerable prelate who presided over the Council, Meletius, Bishop of Antioch. He was a man, who, having been appointed to that see as a supposed Arian by the Emperor Constantine, suffered exile and persecution for his bold profession of the Nicene faith. He was an ideal president of an ecclesiastical assembly, a man whose sweet temper corresponded to the meaning of his name<sup>1</sup>, whose very countenance spoke of calm within

Gregory  
consecrated by  
Meletius,  
Bishop of  
Antioch.

<sup>1</sup> If, that is to say, it was derived from μέλι (= honey). It seems to be found in the form Melitius, as well as Meletius. Gregory says of him—

καλούμενον

\*Ο ἦν. Μελίτος γὰρ καὶ τρόπος καὶ τοῦνομα.

(Carm. ii. 9. 1520-1.)

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and whose hand, stretched forth with mild authority, secured calm without. According to a tradition which was prevalent in the Church in the fifth century<sup>1</sup>, Theodosius, before his accession to the throne, had seen in a dream a venerable man, whom he instinctively knew to be the Bishop of Antioch, enter his room, invest him with the Imperial mantle, and place upon his head the Imperial crown. When the 150 fathers of the Church were summoned to Constantinople, Theodosius expressly enjoined them not to tell him which among them was Meletius. They were all ushered into the palace, and at once the Emperor, leaving the others unnoticed, ran up to the great Meletius, kissed him on the eyes, the lips, the breast, the head, and on the right hand which had conferred upon him the Imperial crown. The recognition was altogether like that between a father and a long separated son, and Theodosius rehearsed to the wondering prelate the vision which made his face familiar.

Death of  
Meletius.

Such was the prelate who placed Gregory in the episcopal chair, and who presided over the earlier sittings of the council. But the good old man died before the council had been many weeks in session, and though his death brought an accession of dignity to the Bishop of Constantinople, for he was naturally chosen to succeed Meletius as president, it brought him also no small accession of labour and sorrow. For the See of Antioch had been for the last twenty years in the peculiar position of having two rival bishops, both orthodox, one of whom was generally recognised by the

<sup>1</sup> Related by Theodoret (*Ecclesiastical History*, v. 6. 71). Theodoret wrote probably between 430 and 450.

Nicene party in the West, and the other by the same party in the East. The venerable Meletius, notwithstanding his bold profession of faith in the Trinity, was repudiated by the stricter members of the orthodox party as having received consecration at the hands of Arian prelates, and eventually, nineteen years before the date of the Council of Constantinople, Paulinus, a steadfast adherent of the Nicene Creed, had been consecrated as a rival Bishop to Meletius, and had received the recognition of Rome and of most of the Churches of the West. Various attempts had been made to heal this senseless schism, which arose from no difference of doctrine but simply from personal antagonism. These attempts, however, had failed, owing to the obstinacy, not so much of the two bishops themselves, who were both high-minded and saintly men, as of the subordinate ecclesiastics of each party; 'vile place-hunters,' says Gregory, 'who were always blowing the flame of contention and who cleverly fought their own battle under the pretext that it was their chief's.' Some of the leading presbyters had, however, sworn not to seek election on the occasion of the death of one of the two claimants, but to accept his rival as bishop of the whole Church.

Now, upon the death of Meletius, the time had come for adopting this reasonable mode of terminating the schism. To this conclusion, to the recognition of Paulinus as the canonical Bishop of Antioch, Gregory now endeavoured to lead the Council. He has preserved to us the purport of his oration on this subject. 'It would not be worth while,' he said, 'to disturb the peace of the world, for which Christ died, even for the sake of two Angels, much less on account of the rival

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

381.

362.

Discussion  
as to suc-  
cessor of  
Meletius.



BOOK I. claims of two Bishops. During the lifetime of the  
 CH. 6. venerable Meletius, it was perhaps right that we  
 381. should stand up for his claims against the opposition  
 of the West: but now that he is dead, let Paulinus  
 take the vacant see. Soon will death cut the knot,  
 for Paulinus is an aged man: and meanwhile we shall  
 have regained the affections of the estranged churches  
 of the West and restored peace to Antioch. Now the  
 faith itself is in danger of perishing through our miser-  
 able squabbles: and rightly, for men may reasonably  
 ask what the faith is worth which permits of our bear-  
 ing such bitter fruits. If any one think that I am  
 influenced by any fear or favour in giving this counsel,  
 or that I have been prompted thereto by the rulers of  
 the State, I can only appeal to the Judgment of Christ  
 at the Last Day to disprove such a charge. For me,  
 I care not for my episcopal dignity, and am quite  
 ready, if you wish me to do so, to lead a throneless  
 life<sup>1</sup>, without glory but also without danger, in some  
 retirement "where the wicked cease from troubling  
 and the weary are at rest."

Uproar  
 in the  
 Council.

As soon as Gregory had ended his oration there  
 arose from all the younger Bishops a sound like the  
 croak of jack-daws. Without reverence for his years,  
 for the dignity of his presidential office, for the place  
 in which they were assembled, they spluttered out  
 their indignant ejaculations, in a tempest of windy  
 wrath, or like wasps whose nest had been disturbed,  
 so they buzzed angrily against the daring bishop who  
 had dared to lift up his voice on behalf of common

<sup>1</sup> 'Ημῖν δὲ συγχωρήσαιτ' ἄθρονον βίον  
 Τὸν ἀκλεῆ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀκίνδυνον  
 Καθήσομ' ἐλθὼν οἱ κακῶν ἐρημία. (Carm. ii. 9. 1671-4).



sense and Christian forbearance<sup>1</sup>. The older prelates, who ought to have checked the young men's excesses, followed ignobly in their train: and the war-cry of all, both old and young, was 'The East against the West.' The East had championed the cause of Meletius: it must not stoop to acknowledge defeat by accepting Paulinus the candidate favoured by the West. It was in the East that Christ had wrought His miracles, had suffered death on the cross, had risen from the dead. Let not Rome or any other western See presume to dictate to the sacred East in matters of Church government. On this argument, which reveals disruptive tendencies that were ultimately to manifest themselves on a larger scale and to exert a fatal influence on the destinies of the Empire, Gregory remarks, with some cleverness, that this geographical view of the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven involves its upholders in some difficulties. If we are to look to the lands of the sunrise for our spiritual light, and if the East is essentially religious and the West irreligious, what is to be said of the points North and South where the sun stops and turns in his yearly orbit? And as for the argument that the East is holy because Christ died there, it may be replied that since Christ must needs suffer, the East was chosen as the scene of his manifestation in the flesh, because only in the East could a people be found wicked enough to crucify Him.

Sick at heart with all the wranglings of the ecclesiastics, and sick in body from confirmed and chronic disease, Gregory absented himself from many meetings of the Council, and rumours of his intended abdication

BOOK I.  
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381.

Gregory  
attacked by  
Egyptian  
Bishops.

<sup>1</sup> These metaphors, which it is hard to combine, are all taken from Gregory (Carm. ii. 9. 1680-7).

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began to circulate, arousing among his flock, especially among the poorer members of it, passionate lamentations and earnest entreaties that he would not leave them. Such was the posture of affairs when a crowd of Egyptian and Macedonian Bishops arrived to share the deliberations of the Council. Some of these may possibly have taken part in the earlier Alexandrian intrigue for the elevation of Maximus. With Gregory's doctrine they could find no fault: in fact they were, like himself, zealous champions of the faith of Nicaea. But they came, as he says, 'like boars with whetted tusks,' eager for battle with the Bishops of Asia, especially with the followers of the party of Meletius, and they perceived in the consecration of Gregory by Meletius a point of attack against the memory of that prelate too advantageous not to be occupied. For by one of the Nicene Canons, never formally abrogated, if in practice little regarded, it was forbidden to translate a Bishop from one see to another. As Gregory therefore had certainly been consecrated Bishop of Sasima, if he had not also virtually officiated as Bishop of Nazianzus, his consecration as Bishop of Constantinople was irregular, and the dead Meletius must be censured for having performed it.

Abdication  
of Gregory.

The Egyptian Bishops assured Gregory that it was not against himself personally that these proceedings were aimed: but they filled full the measure of his disgust with Bishops and Councils, and ecclesiastical intrigues. He tells us that he was like a steed chained to the stall, but stamping with its hoof and whinnying for freedom and its old pastures: and in this technical point raised by the Egyptian bishops he saw the means of his deliverance. Dragging himself from his sick-

bed to the Council, he begged them not to interrupt those deliberations to which God had summoned them by the discussion of anything so unimportant as his position in the Church. Though guiltless of the storm he would gladly offer himself, like Jonah, for the safety of the ship. His glory would be to renounce an Episcopal throne in order to restore peace to the Church. 'I depart: to this conclusion my weary body also persuades me. I have but one debt still to pay, the debt of mortality, and that is in the hand of God.'

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The resignation of Gregory was accepted with a readiness and unanimity, which, he admits, surprised him<sup>1</sup>: and he returned to his home with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, joy that he had obtained a surcease from unwelcome toil, sorrow that he was leaving his flock to unknown guidance through the unknown dangers of the wilderness.

It remained only to visit the Emperor and announce to him the vacancy of the Metropolitan See. With a certain proud humility Gregory appeared before the wearer of the purple and said, 'Let others ask of you, oh great Prince, gold for themselves, or beautiful mosaics for their churches<sup>2</sup>, or office for their kinsfolk; I ask a greater gift than these, leave to withdraw from the unreasonableness and jealousy of the world, and to reverence thrones [whether episcopal or imperial] from a distance and not nigh at hand. You have quelled the audacity of the barbarians: may you now win a bloodless victory over the spirit of discord in the Church.' The Emperor and all his courtiers applauded

<sup>1</sup> πλείον, ἢ καλῶς ἔχει

Ἄφνω τετίμημ' εὐκόλῳ συναινέσει.

<sup>2</sup> Οὐ χρυσὸν αἰτῶ σ', οὐ πλάκας περιχρῶνς. (Carm. ii. 9. 1883).

BOOK I. the eloquent words of the prelate, but the command  
CH. 6. (if such command were expected) to reconsider his  
 July, 381. decision, came not: and Gregory, after doing his utmost to reconcile his faithful flock to his departure, quitted Constantinople. He had preached in that city during a space of two years and a half, but had been only for about three months the recognised occupant of the episcopal throne.

Old age  
 and death  
 of Gregory.

He returned to his native Cappadocia, endeavoured, not altogether successfully, again to guide the affairs of the Church of Nazianzus, retired to a little estate at the neighbouring village of Arianzus, and died there about 389, having attained, probably, the 65th year of his age. His premature old age was harassed by the vexations of a relative and neighbour named Valentinian, and saddened by great bodily weakness and spiritual depression. He longed after his flock at Constantinople, and in pathetic poems expressed his yearnings after the beloved Church of Anastasia, which the visions of the night brought with sad reality before him.

With all the obvious weaknesses of his character, there is something strangely attractive in the figure of this great champion of orthodoxy. In his mixture of zeal and tenderness, in his rapid transitions from triumph to depression, there is something which reminds us of the Apostle Paul: yet if we put the two lives side by side, and compare the utterances of the two men, we feel, perhaps, more vividly than in the case of more obviously unworthy successors of the Apostles, how great was the moral descent from the Christianity of the first to that of the fourth century, how ennobling and exalting to the whole character of man was the



power, the indefinable quality which was possessed by Paul of Tarsus, but which was not possessed by Gregory of Nazianzus.

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Soon after the departure of Gregory the Council of Constantinople ended its labours. Flavian, a presbyter who belonged to the party of Meletius, was chosen as his successor in the See of Antioch. For the all-important See of Constantinople, Theodosius selected Nectarius, a man of high birth—he belonged to a senatorial family—and filling at the time the office of Praetor, but unknown in the ecclesiastical world, and still only a catechumen. His mild and conciliatory temper, and the knowledge of the world which he had acquired in his political career, were his chief recommendations, and in fact, during his long episcopate he contrived to steer the bark of the Church of Constantinople with more skill than either of the far more famous theologians by whom he was preceded and followed.

Subse-  
quent pro-  
ceedings  
of the  
Council.

And thus it was, to return to the laws of Theodosius for the suppression of heresy, that on the 30th of July, 381, the Emperor ordered all the churches throughout his dominions to be handed over to those Bishops whose orthodoxy was guaranteed by the fact of their holding communion with Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, and Timotheus, Bishop of Alexandria. The old expedient of requiring subscription to a creed was abandoned: and communion with men of ascertained orthodoxy was substituted in its place.

If there were any of that reluctance which Gregory discovered in Theodosius to force the consciences of his subjects into compliance with his own belief, it soon disappeared under the influence of the exhortations to



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CH. 6.

more zeal which he received from his Bishops and from his wife, the devout Flaccilla, and also doubtless under the increasing intolerance of opinions different from his own which is wont to be engendered in the breast of the possessor of absolute power. Fifteen<sup>1</sup> stern edicts against heresy, one on an average for every year of his reign, were his contribution to the Imperial Statute-book.

Theodosius' legislation against heretics.

Already on the 10th of January, 381, Theodosius had launched the first of these imperial thunderbolts with an energy which one would have thought might have rendered it unnecessary for Gregory of Nazianzus to apologise for his too great moderation, 'Let there be no place left to the heretics for celebrating the mysteries of their faith, no opportunity to exhibit their stupid obstinacy. Let popular crowds be kept away from the assemblies, now pronounced unlawful, of all heretics. Let the name of one supreme God be everywhere glorified, let the observance of the Nicene faith, handed down to us from of old by our ancestors, be for ever confirmed. Let the contaminating plague of Photinus, the sacrilegious poison of Arius, the criminal misbelief of Eunomius, and the unutterable enormities of the other sects which are called after the monstrous names of their authors, be banished from our hearing. He is to be accounted an assertor of the Nicene faith and a true Catholic who confesses Almighty God and Christ the Son of God, one in name with the Father,

<sup>1</sup> Fifteen are enumerated by Gothofred. It is true that the last (Cod. Theod. xvi. 5. 23) is a relaxation of the law forbidding bequests by Arians. But on the other hand l. 15, which Gothofred attributes to Valentinian II, may surely be attributed with equal justice to Theodosius.

God of God, Light of Light : who does not by denying the existence of the Holy Ghost insult that Spirit through whom comes whatsoever we hope to receive from the great Father of us all : whose unstained faith holds fast that undivided substance of the Incorruptible Trinity which the Orthodox Greeks assert under the name of Ousia<sup>1</sup>. These doctrines are abundantly proved to us : these are to be revered. Let all who do not obey them cease from those hypocritical wiles by which they claim for themselves the name—the alien name—of the true religion, and let them be branded with the shame of their manifested crimes. Let them be kept entirely away from even the thresholds of the churches, since we shall allow no heretics to hold their unlawful assemblies within the towns. If they attempt any outbreak, we order that their rage shall be quelled and that they shall be cast forth outside the walls of the cities, so that the Catholic Churches throughout the whole world be restored to the orthodox prelates who hold the Nicene faith<sup>2</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

So began the campaign which ended in the virtual extinction of Arianism in the Roman world, and the acceptance of the Nicene Creed as part of the fundamental constitution of the Empire. The contents of

<sup>1</sup> 'Being,' or 'Substance.' 'Homo-ousios' = 'of one Substance' [with the Father].

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Theod. xvi. 5. 6. It will be observed that Theodosius speaks of restoration of the Churches to the Nicenes 'toto orbe.' Yet, in the name of his colleague, Valentinian II, Justina, mother of that Emperor, was at this time contending, and for years after contended, on this very point, with St. Ambrose. The position of affairs suggests a doubt how far edicts of this kind, though issued in the names of *all* the Emperors, were tacitly recognised as having validity only in the dominions of one of them.

BOOK I. the fifteen edicts against heretics may be summarised  
 CH. 6. thus. No Arians were to be at liberty to build a  
 384. church either in city or country in which to celebrate  
 the rites of their dire communion; and houses devoted  
 to this purpose in defiance of the law were to be con-  
 fiscated by the State<sup>1</sup>. Nor were they to be allowed  
 to ordain priests; and if they transgressed this com-  
 mand 'all who should dare to take the polluted name  
 of priests among these sectaries and who pretended to  
 teach that which it is disgraceful to learn, should be  
 hunted without mercy out of the city of Constantinople,  
 388. to live in other places apart from the intercourse of  
 good men<sup>2</sup>.' A few years later, the limits within which  
 the Arians were suffered to live were yet further re-  
 stricted. They were to be banished not from the capital  
 only but from all the cities of the Empire. 'Let them  
 resort to places which may most effectually, as if with  
 a rampart, shut them off from all human fellowship<sup>3</sup>.  
 We add that they shall be altogether denied oppor-  
 tunities of visiting and petitioning Our Serenity.'

In order to enforce the edicts for the suppression of  
 heretical meetings, a series of laws were passed by  
 Theodosius and his sons with the object of enlisting  
 the instincts of the possessors of property on the side  
 of orthodoxy, by making these 'dens of wild beasts'<sup>4</sup>  
 subject to confiscation either by the State, or, in the  
 392. later legislation, by the Catholic Church. 'The place

<sup>1</sup> l. c., 8, 12.

<sup>2</sup> l. c., 13.

<sup>3</sup> 'Adeant loca, quae hos potissimum quasi vallo, quodammodo ab humana communione secludant' (l. 14).

<sup>4</sup> 'Aedificia quae non ecclesiae sed *antra* debent *feralia* nominari' (l. 57). (This is a law not of Theodosius but of his son, A.D. 415.)

in which the forbidden rites are attempted shall, if the thing were done with the connivance of the owner, be added to the possessions of our treasury. If it can be proved that the owner of the house was ignorant of the transaction [he shall not forfeit his property, but] the tenant who allowed it to be so used shall pay 10 lbs. of gold [£400], or if poor and sprung from servile filth, shall be beaten with clubs and banished. We especially order that if the building in question form part of the Imperial property, the procurator who has let it and the tenant who has hired it be each fined 10 lbs. of gold. A similar fine is to be exacted from any who shall dare to usurp the name of clergyman and assist at the mysteries of heretics <sup>1</sup>.

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Occasionally a gleam of mildness darts across the thundercloud of the Imperial anger. 'The Taxodrocitae,' says Theodosius, 'need not be turned out of their dwellings, but no crowd is to be permitted to assemble at any church of this heretical superstition; or if by chance it should come together there it is to be promptly dispersed.' The sect with this barbarous name, for which an Emperor of Rome condescended thus specially to legislate, was, we are told, a set of men who prayed with the forefinger held under the nose to give themselves an appearance of sadness and holiness.

391.

Upon the Manicheans the orthodox Emperor was especially severe, but this is not surprising since, as we have seen, even the tolerant Valentinian thought himself bound to suppress their teaching, as tending to the subversion of morality. Any bequest to or by a Manichean, male or female, was declared void, and the pro-

381.

<sup>1</sup> L. c., 21.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

perty which it was attempted thus to pass lapsed to the treasury. But by a curious anticipation of the 'Irish Penal Laws' of the eighteenth century, it was ordered that any children of Manichean parents who might be found professing the true faith should escape the operation of this edict and, presumably, enter into the immediate possession of property for which they must otherwise have awaited their father's death. And then reverting to his former denunciation of the heretics: 'They shall not escape,' says the Imperial legislator, 'by taking other names which seem of more pious sound than that of Manichean. Such are they who call themselves the Continent ones<sup>1</sup>, the World-renouncers<sup>2</sup>, the Water-users<sup>3</sup>, and the Sackcloth-wearers<sup>4</sup>. All these, with whatever names they may seek to cloak themselves, are to be execrated as men branded with the crime of heresy<sup>5</sup>.'

382.

In the next decree but one it seems to be ordered that the sectaries who bear these names of pretended holiness be capitally punished<sup>6</sup>; and it is added that all those who do not concur in the celebration of Easter at the usual time shall be considered equally guilty with the heretics at whom the law is expressly aimed.

Certainly there was no need to complain of Theodosius' lack of persecuting zeal. Whatever arguments

<sup>1</sup> Encratitae.

<sup>2</sup> Apotactitae.

<sup>3</sup> Hydroparastatae (users of water instead of wine in the Communion).

<sup>4</sup> Saccophori.

<sup>5</sup> l. 7.

<sup>6</sup> I do not see what other meaning we can attach to the words 'summo supplicio et inexpiabili poena jubemus affligi,' but there is perhaps some intentional vagueness in the language employed (l. 9).



might be alleged for the suppression of the awful doubt of the Manicheans, no such defence can be made for the desperate servility with which an Emperor of Rome placed all the vast powers of the State at the disposal of the Catholic Bishops, in order to enforce the observance of the festival of the Resurrection on a certain artificially calculated Sunday rather than on the 16th of Nisan. It was with an appearance of gracious liberality that Theodosius allowed freedom of worship to all who delighted in worshipping God in the beauty of holiness and with true and right observance<sup>1</sup>; but it was clear that right observance meant compliance, in the minutest particular, with the commands of the Bishops who stood round the Imperial throne; and the very sentence which seemed to announce this tolerant maxim declared that all the members of the anathematised sects who should dare to come together in crowds, to fit up their houses in the likeness of churches, or to do any act public or private which could interfere with Catholic holiness, should be expelled [from the cities] by the concerted action of all good men.

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

383.

No doubt it was long before the theoretical severity of the persecution of heretics could be translated into fact in all the cities of the empire. The frequent repetition of almost identical edicts shows how easily they lapsed into disuse, either through the inherent difficulty of enforcing them or through the venality, the good-nature or the secret inclination to heresy of the provincial governors who were charged with their exe-

Were these  
Edicts  
actually  
enforced?

<sup>1</sup> I would thus paraphrase, I can hardly translate, the words 'permissa omnibus facultate, quos rectae observantiae cultus et pulchritudo delectat' (l. 11).

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

cution. Indeed, we are expressly told by one of the Church historians<sup>1</sup> that 'great as were the punishments ordained by the laws against heretics, they were not always inflicted; for the Emperor had no wish to persecute his subjects; he only desired to enforce uniformity of religion by means of intimidation;'—an apology, it may be remarked in passing, which is as good for Diocletian or Galerius as it is for Theodosius. But none the less was the Theodosian religious legislation ultimately successful in the suppression of all teaching opposed to the creed of Nicæa, and the victory thus won exerted an immense and, in my view, a disastrous influence on the fortunes of the Empire, of Christianity, and even of Modern Europe.

Effect of  
this legis-  
lation on  
the Em-  
pire,

The Empire suffered alike from the strength and the weakness of the Imperial persecutor. Such edicts as those which we have been considering must have loosened the bonds of loyalty in many regions of the empire, must have sent many sectaries to the mountains and the wilderness, with savage hearts, ready to co-operate with the first barbarian invader who would avenge their cause upon the orthodox Augustus and his Bishops. But even the imperfect execution of the decrees must also have done harm to the State. The obligations of discipline were relaxed, the muscles of the administration lost their firmness, when edict after edict issued from the Imperial *secretum*, which could not be, or at any rate was not, literally obeyed by more than a small minority of the officials of the provinces.

on the  
Church.

To Christianity there might seem to be a temporary gain in the cessation of the wearisome and profitless talk concerning the nature of the Godhead. But nothing

<sup>1</sup> Sozomen, vii. 12.

was further from the subtle intellect of the Grecian BOOK I.  
CH. 6. East than giving up the dispute as to the relation of Jesus Christ to the Father of whom He spoke, and setting to work to practise His precepts. Shut out henceforward from the Arian controversy, the Orientals plunged with all the more eagerness into the Nestorian and Monophysite controversies. The stream of interminable babble still flowed on, eddying now, not round the doctrine of the Trinity, but round the doctrine of the Person of Christ. Faith died and Theology was occupied in garnishing her sepulchre with elaborate and fantastic devices, when, from the burning plains of Arabia the harsh war-cry of another faith, narrow and poverty-stricken in comparison with the earlier faith of the Christians, but still a living Faith in the Unseen, was heard, and the Mosque of the Moslem, with its sublime motto 'Allah Wahdahu' (God Alone), replaced the Christian Church with its crosses and mosaics of the saints. Had the State not endeavoured to enforce one uniform creed in Constantinople, in Antioch, in Alexandria, it is possible that Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt might at this day be owning the teaching of Christ rather than that of Mohammed.

But most fatal of all was the direction given by so great an Emperor as Theodosius to the energies of Effect on  
Mediæval  
Europe. European rulers during the period—not far short of a millennium and a half—during which the Roman empire was the model proposed for imitation by all the half-barbarous states which arose upon its ruins. Following the example which he had set, every European ruler during the Middle Ages deemed it one of his duties to enforce 'the Catholic unity' upon his subjects. It was a duty which no doubt was often

BOOK I.  
CH. 6.

neglected, but still it was a duty, for the great Caesars of Rome had practised it; and therefore we have among these princes the same paradox which meets us in the case of the Roman Caesars, that the best sovereigns were often the most relentless persecutors. Sometimes however, especially in the later days of pre-revolutionary Europe, a king atoned for his own lax morality by zeal in the punishment of heretics. Almost into our own age the baneful influence lasted. Eight years after the accession to the throne of the grandfather of our present sovereign, an old Frenchwoman named Marie Durand was liberated from the Tour de Constance at Aigues Mortes, in which she had been imprisoned for thirty-eight years. The only crime which was alleged against her (and even that falsely) was that her marriage had been solemnised by her brother, a Huguenot minister, who, by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, had been forbidden to exercise any religious function. This was the crime for which thirty-eight years of imprisonment were not considered too severe a punishment, and the monarch in whose name the sentence was inflicted was the eldest son of the Church, the most Christian and most Infamous Louis XV. The chain of causes and effects is a long one, but we shall probably be safe in asserting that if Theodosius had elected to follow the wise example of Valentinian, and had refused to enforce religious uniformity by the power of the State, that hapless daughter of Provence would not have languished for a lifetime in the dreary dungeon of Aquae Mortuae.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FALL OF GRATIAN.

#### Authorities.

##### *Sources:—*

Besides the sources enumerated in the previous chapters (the chief of whom, now that we have lost the help of Ammianus Marcellinus, is the unsatisfactory Zosimus), we get some assistance for the reign of Gratian from the work which often goes by the name of SEXTUS AURELIUS VICTOR 'De Vita et Moribus Imperatorum Romanorum,' but which is more safely quoted as 'Epitoma de Vita et Moribus Imperatorum,' its connection with Victor being doubtful. Victor was governor of Pannonia Secunda under Constantius, and Prefect of Rome under Theodosius. If the Epitoma does not come from his hand, it is nevertheless pretty clearly the work of a contemporary, and its notices though scanty are valuable.

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

A good deal of information as to the reign of Gratian is derived from the writings of AUSONIUS (Consul, 379), whose position at the Court is described in the following chapter, and from the sermons and letters of AMBROSE.

BARBARIAN invasion and religious controversy have compelled us to devote a large share of attention to the fortunes of the Eastern Empire. The scene now shifts from Thrace to Gaul, from the sea which flowed like a river past the churches and palaces of Constantinople, to the river which widened into lakes under the vine-clad hills of Gallia Belgica. Here, on the banks of the beautiful Moselle, stands the 'August city of the

Gratian's  
capital.  
Trier.



BOOK I. Treveri<sup>1</sup>, now called by its German possessors, Trier,  
CH. 7. by its French neighbours, Trêves; a city which claims to have been founded by Assyrian emigrants at the time of the Call of Abraham, but which has more substantial titles to the veneration of the archaeologist, as possessing undoubtedly finer remains of Roman architecture than any other city north of the Alps. Here the traveller can still see the massive buttresses which once supported the Roman bridge over the Moselle,—the Amphitheatre in which the young Constantine made the Frankish kings, his captives, fight with the lions of Libya,—the massive walls of the building<sup>2</sup> which was once probably the Palace of the Praetorian Prefect, perhaps of the Emperor himself, when he resided at Augusta Treverorum. Here is the Basilica or Hall of Judgment of Constantine, now used as a Protestant Church, and here is another Basilica, begun probably by Valentinian and completed by Gratian himself, whose four gigantic columns, with the vast arches springing from them, formed the nucleus round which the cathedral of the Prince-Bishops of Trier has strangely crystallised. But beyond all other wonders of this most wonderful city is the huge mass of the Porta Nigra, a fortress-gateway, far surpassing in size any structure of the same kind at Rome itself, and probably built by Valentinian or by one of his immediate predecessors. This mighty pile, the lower stories of which were throughout the Middle Ages choked with rubbish, while its upper part was turned into a church, or rather into two churches, has now by the Prussian Government

<sup>1</sup> Augusta Treverorum.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly called the Roman Baths, but almost certainly a Palace.

been cleared of all these incongruous additions, and frowns down on the breweries and the gas-works as it frowned down on the Court, the Camp, and the Basilica in the days of Gratian <sup>1</sup>.

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

Augusta Treverorum appears to have become the regular official residence of the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul towards the end of the third century. Constantine enriched it with many fine buildings, often abode in its palace, and as has been said, celebrated the games in its Amphitheatre. His son, Constantine II, Valentinian, and Gratian, all treated it as their chief capital city. Here then Gratian dwelt for the greater part of his seven years' reign, except when his presence was needed at Sirmium to direct the operations of his generals against the Goths during the sickness of Theodosius, or at Milan to guide the counsels of his impulsive step-mother, Justina. The beginning of his reign was full of promise. Besides the successes which his arms achieved against the Lentienses and the Visigoths, successes the glory of which of course rested chiefly with his generals, he had the more personal merit of mitigating the harshness of his father's policy and of punishing some of the chief instruments of his cruelty. Thus, as has been already said <sup>2</sup>, both Maximin and his assessor Simplicius were, apparently at the outset of the reign of Gratian, handed over to the sword of the executioner.

Much of the credit of Gratian's early popularity is doubtless due to the two wise counsellors by whom his policy was chiefly guided. The first of these was

Gratian's  
Coun-  
sellors.  
Mero-  
baudes.

<sup>1</sup> The best description of Augusta Treverorum that we possess in English is contained in Freeman's *Historical Essays*, 3rd Series.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 213.

BOOK I. Merobaudes the Frank, who for his surpassing military  
CH. 7. talents had been made Master of the Soldiery by Valentinian<sup>1</sup>, and who had protected the interests of the family of the deceased Emperor in the stormy debates which followed that Emperor's death. He shared the honours of the consulship with Gratian in 377, and was probably his chief adviser in all military matters during the eight years of his reign<sup>2</sup>. Notwithstanding a passage in one of the chroniclers<sup>3</sup> which throws a doubt on his fidelity, there is reason to believe that the old general remained true to the house of Valentinian to the end, and perished because of that fidelity.

Ausonius. A very different character from that of the martial Frank was borne by the other chief counsellor of the young prince, once his tutor, now his minister, Decimus Magnus Ausonius. This man's history was a good illustration of the way in which the profession of rhetoric might even under so autocratic a system of government as the Roman Empire, lead a person of modest birth and fortune to the most brilliant prizes of the civil service.

Ausonius was born at Bordeaux in the early years of the fourth century, and was the son of an eminent physician named Julius Ausonius. Decimus Ausonius studied rhetoric, taught grammar, and in middle life was appointed tutor to the young Gratian. The pupil  
(Between 364 and 367.) seems to have truly loved his preceptor, who describes

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, iv. 17.

<sup>2</sup> It seems to me far more probable that the 'two Nestors' to whom Themistius refers in his 13th Oration (p. 173, ed. Paris) are Merobaudes and Ausonius than Ausonius and Ambrose, as suggested in a note of Harduin's.

<sup>3</sup> Prosper: see below.

himself as 'tranquil, indulgent, mild of eye, of voice, of countenance<sup>1</sup>:' and the stern Valentinian respected him. Hence honours and emoluments flowed in upon himself and his family. His aged father was made Prefect of Illyricum: he himself was successively count, quaestor, and Praetorian Prefect, ruling in the latter capacity Gaul, Illyricum, and Italy. Prefectures and proconsulates were also bestowed on a son, a son-in-law, and a nephew of the favoured tutor, and in the year 379 he himself was raised to the supreme, the almost overwhelming honour of the consulship.

To subsequent generations Ausonius has been chiefly interesting as representing the late autumn of Roman poetry. It is true that he cannot be classed above the third-rate poets, that many of his works are mere metrical conceits, of no literary value, that he has no striking thoughts nor especially melodious diction: but there is in this 'tranquil and indulgent man with his mild voice and eye' a certain gentle susceptibility to the beauties of Nature which makes him a not altogether unworthy successor of Virgil, a not entirely futile forerunner of our modern school of poetry. His most celebrated poem is an 'Idyll,' in which he sings the praises of the Moselle. The vine-covered hills above, reminding him of his native Garonne, the villas which lined both sides of the valley, the happy labourers at their harvest toil, the stream itself 'like the sea bearing mighty ships, like a river rushing along with whirling waters,' the white pebbles of its bed clearly seen through its transparent tide, and the grassy mounds reflected in its still pools: all these are described, if with rather too obvious a desire to imitate

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

Poetry of  
Ausonius.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tranquillus, clemens, oculis, voce, ore serenus' (Idyll. ii. 43).

BOOK I. Virgil, still by one whose eye was open to behold the  
 CH. 7. beauties of Nature. It must be admitted, however, that there is much vapid mythological allusion, even in this short poem, and that when the bard enumerates the various kinds of fish that might be caught in the Moselle, and the different streams that helped to swell its waters, he does not rise much above the level of a catalogue in verse.

A poem of more personal interest, but one of which we unfortunately possess only the beginning, is the *Ephemeris*, or story of a day in the author's life. The poet begins in soft Sapphics, calling his lazy slave Parmeno to awake :—

'Now the bright-eyed Morn re-illumes the window;  
 Now the wakeful swift in her nest is chirping;  
 You, my slave! as though it were scarcely midnight,  
 Parmeno! sleep still.

Dormice sleep, 'tis true for a livelong winter;  
 Sleep, but feed not. You, like a lazy glutton,  
 Drink deep drafts before you lie down to slumber;  
 Therefore you snore still.

Therefore voice of mine cannot pierce those ear-flaps,  
 Therefore slumber reigns in your vacant mind-place,  
 Therefore Light's bright beams with a vain endeavour  
 Play on your eye-lids.

Bards have told the tale of a youth whose slumbers  
 Lasted on, unbroken, a mortal twelvemonth,  
 Nights and days alike, while the Moon above him  
 Smiled on his sleeping.

Rise! you dawdler; rise! or this rod corrects you.  
 Rise! lest deeper sleep, when you least expect it,  
 Wrap your soul<sup>1</sup>: your limbs from that couch of softness,  
 Parmeno! lift now.

<sup>1</sup> 'Surge ne longus tibi somnus unde  
 Non times detur.'

(Taken over from Horace, *Carm.* iii. 11.)



Ah! perhaps my gentle harmonious Sapphics  
Soothe his brain and make but his sleep the sweeter.  
Drop we then the Lesbian tune, and try the  
    Sharper Iambus.

Here: boy! Arise! My sandals bring  
And fetch me water from the spring,  
That I may wash hands, eyes and face;  
And bring my muslin robe apace;  
And any dress that's fit to wear  
Bring quick, for I abroad would fare.  
Then deck the chapel, where anon  
I'll pay my morning orison.  
No need of great equipments there,  
But harmless thoughts and pious prayer;  
No frankincense I need to burn;  
The honeyed pastry-cake I spurn.  
The altar of the living sod  
I leave to others, while to God  
The Father with coëqual Son  
And Spirit, linked in unison,  
I pray in this my morning hour.  
I think upon the present Power:  
My spirit trembles. He is here,  
Yet what have Hope and Faith to fear?'

Then follows a prayer consisting chiefly of 'an anxiously orthodox invocation of the Trinity<sup>1</sup>,' but with something more than mere orthodoxy in its closing sentences. The poet desires to be kept in goodness and purity, to be neither truly accused nor falsely suspected of crime, to have the use of his faculties and the love of his friends preserved to him, and when the last hour comes, neither to fear death nor yet to long for it.

Here unfortunately the best part of the poem ends.

<sup>1</sup> I borrow this phrase from Mr. Simcox's *History of Latin Literature* (vol. ii. 346), to which I refer the reader who desires fuller information as to the poetry of *Ausonius*.

BOOK I. Ausonius has asked five guests to dine with him, and  
 CH. 7.

gives some directions to the cook as to the preparation of the repast: but the dinner itself, the talk of the guests, the *siesta*, the games which might have followed it—all these are absent from this record of a day: and after a long break we have only a humorous description of the nightmare dreams which follow the too luxurious banquet. Knowing what caused the ruin of the poet's Imperial pupil, Gratian, we notice with some interest that one of the worst of these dreams is that in which Ausonius sees himself dragged away, helpless and unarmed, among bands of captive Alans<sup>1</sup>.

Religious  
 position of  
 Ausonius.

At an epoch of transition such as that which we are studying, we look attentively to see what was the mental attitude of the chief writers of the day towards the religious questions which stirred the minds of the multitude and evoked the edicts of emperors. The general tone of Ausonius' poetry seems to be monotheistic but Pagan. He corresponds on intimate terms with Symmachus, the great supporter of Paganism at Rome: and the Professors of Rhetoric at Bordeaux, Toulouse, and other cities of Southern Gaul, whose fame he commemorates in a poem specially dedicated to their honour, seem to have been for the most part followers of the old religion. On the other hand, as we have seen, he is anxious to show himself not only a Christian, but an orthodox Trinitarian, in his *Ephemeris*. Probably the fact is that he was sprung from a family which was either heathen, or indifferent to religious controversy, that in his profession as a rhetorician he was brought into contact chiefly with the votaries of

<sup>1</sup> 'Cerno, triumphantes inter, me plaudere: rursum  
 Inter captivos trahor exarmatus Alanos.'

the Olympian gods, but that in middle life he professed, and perhaps possessed, a sufficient amount of faith in Christianity to make it not unsuitable that he should be appointed tutor to a Christian Augustus. The important point to notice, and that which justifies us for having spent a few pages on the character and career of this third-rate poet, is that what is now called Culture was still for the most part loyal to the old gods of Greece and Rome. Christianity, such as it was, had conquered in the forum, in the army, and in the council-chamber; but it had not yet succeeded in establishing its dominion in the author's study or the professor's lecture-room.

Very different from Ausonius in character, in mental fibre, and in his influence on his own and succeeding ages, was another adviser who, though not a minister of state like Merobaudes or Ausonius, still did much to mould the mind of Gratian. This was the far-famed bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose. Sprung from one of the great official families of the Empire, Ambrose passed the years of infancy in the palace of the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, for that was the high office (carrying with it dominion over Britain, Gaul, and Spain), which was wielded by his father and namesake. We are not informed where the elder Ambrose was dwelling when his son was born to him; but it is at least a plausible conjecture that it was at Augusta Treverorum; and if so the ruined pile on the outskirts of Trier, which went till lately by the name of the 'Roman Baths,' is probably the building in which the child, who was to be one day the greatest theologian of the West, first saw the light, and through the open windows of which, according to his biographer's story, the swarm

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

St. Ambrose.

Circa 340.

BOOK I. of bees came flying, which crept in and out of the  
CH. 7. open mouth of the slumbering infant—a presage of his  
future sweet and golden eloquence.

Like his father, Ambrose seemed destined to be a great Imperial official. He pleaded as an advocate in the Court of the Praetorian Prefect of Italy<sup>1</sup>, and (probably about the 30th year of his age) was advanced to the dignity of *Clarissimus Consularis Liguriae et Aemiliae*<sup>2</sup>. Here while he was discharging the duties of his office with impartial industry, and thus winning the esteem of the provincials to whom a just governor was not one of the ordinary blessings of life, he was  
374. one day summoned to the great Basilica of Mediolanum in order to quell what seemed likely to be a bloody tumult arising out of a disputed episcopal election. Auxentius, the just deceased Bishop, had been an Arian. A strong and clamorous party wished to give him an Arian successor; but other voices, probably more numerous, shouted for the election of one who would uphold the creed of Nicaea. While Ambrose, surrounded by his guards, was addressing the excited multitude, and seeking to persuade or awe them into stillness, suddenly a voice was heard—the voice of a little child said the poetic imagination of those who had after-

<sup>1</sup> Probus, the same whom we have seen presiding, not very successfully, over the Prefecture of Illyricum.

<sup>2</sup> 'Liguria' at this time was the official designation of the province on the left bank of the upper course of the Padus, corresponding to Northern Piedmont, and part of Western Lombardy, and Aemilia marked the rest of the course of the river on its southern bank. The junction of these two seems to make a somewhat awkward and straggling province to be allotted to one governor. 'Consular' was the title of the ordinary Governor of a province and had no reference to his tenure of a Consulship.

wards to tell the story—clear and distinct, through the eloquent speech of the young Consular: 'Ambrose is Bishop.' The voice was hailed as an omen from heaven. Probably as Ambrose was still but a catechumen, each party hoped that he might be persuaded to enlist under its banner. The determination of the people to have Ambrose for their Bishop was only increased by the strange and repulsive expedients to which he resorted in order to give force to what was perhaps in his case a genuine utterance '*Nolo episcopari.*' After an attempted flight he surrendered himself to the will of the people, was baptised as a Christian, and on the eighth day sat in the marble chair of the Basilica, a consecrated Bishop.

Not for long were the two parties left in doubt which of them Ambrose would join. He soon showed himself an earnest, an eloquent, and a somewhat high-handed votary of the faith of Nicaea, to the final victory of which creed he contributed as effectually in the West as Basil and Gregory had done in the East. It was he who in the year 381 procured the assembling of a Council at Aquileia for the deposition of Palladius and Secundianus, two aged semi-Arian Bishops. He conducted the bitter cross-examination which preceded their condemnation, refusing their appeals to a General Council, taking them point by point through all the heresies of Arius, and calling upon them either to anathematise, or to prove the theses of the arch-heretic<sup>1</sup>. Finally it was Ambrose who, reciting the 'blasphemies' of the two defendants, obtained the unanimous anathemas of the Bishops (collected chiefly from the cities of Northern Italy, and Gaul) who were assembled

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

Orthodoxy  
of Ambrose.

<sup>1</sup> 'Aut damna hodie Arium aut defende.'



BOOK I. in the Aquileian Basilica, and it was Ambrose who  
 CH. 7. drew up the report of the Council addressed to the Emperors, praying that the deposed prelates might be kept from entering the churches, and that holy men might be appointed in their places<sup>1</sup>.

Treatise  
*De Fide.*

378.

Upon the young and ardent mind of Gratian, St. Ambrose, in the fervour of his zeal for Nicene orthodoxy, and with that wealth of experience which he had collected both from his political and his ecclesiastical career, seems to have exercised an extraordinary influence. When the Emperor was moving his troops eastward to help his ill-fated uncle against the Goths, he besought the Bishop of Milan to give him some treatise concerning the Catholic Faith, by which he might strengthen his heart for the combat. Probably Gratian was thinking of the apparently inevitable discussions with the Arian Valens and the Bishops who surrounded him, but Ambrose understood him to allude to the battle with the Goths, and in the treatise *De Fide* which he composed in answer to the request, remarked that victory was often won rather by the faith of the general than by the valour of the soldiers. 'Abraham with only 318 trained servants had conquered an innumerable multitude of his enemies [in his pursuit of Chedorlaomer]: and as the same number of prelates, the 318 fathers of Nicaea, had erected an eternal monument of divine truth, it should be his business

<sup>1</sup> The acts of the Council of Aquileia are included among the letters of St. Ambrose (787-810, vol. ii. part i. 915-944, ed. Migne). They are especially important because our best account of Ulfilas is contained in some angry comments upon these Acta from the hand of some Arian sympathiser, apparently a certain Bishop Maximin. See Waitz, 'Ueber das Leben und die Lehre des Ulfila.'

to set up the trophy thus erected in the mind of his Imperial disciple. BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

These then were the manifold influences that had helped to form the character of the young Augustus of the West, for whom both friends and flatterers might not unreasonably anticipate a long and brilliant tenure of 'the rule of the universe.' In order to see him thus in the splendour of his prime, it may be worth our while to accompany two of his professed panegyrists into his presence and listen to their praises, fulsome indeed, but not devoid of some traces of truthful portraiture.

It was perhaps in the early part of 376<sup>1</sup> that the orator Themistius, who had been despatched by Valens on an embassy to his nephew, and who had visited his court in Gaul, returning with him as far as Rome, pronounced there a solemn panegyric in presence of the Emperor and the Senate. The title of the oration was 'A Love-speech, concerning the Beauty of the Emperor.' Striking the key-note by a reference to the discussion on Love in the 'Banquet' of Plato, Themistius declares that he never could understand, aforesaid, Socrates' description of the pleasing torments endured by the lover; but all is now made plain to him, now in his old age, since he has fallen in love with the beauty of Gratian. 'Oh! so rare a being do I behold before me: a fair mind in a fair body, and a promise of greater loveliness to come. I sought my ideal of beauty and virtue in the dwellings of the poor, and found it not. Then I turned again to the "Phaedrus" of Plato, and learned from it that beauty has in it something

<sup>1</sup> According to the Theodosian Code, Gratian would seem to have been in Rome on the 16th April, 376.

BOOK I.  
CH. 7.

376.

divine, and I bethought me that it was to be looked for amongst kings and emperors who are likest gods on earth. So I went, in my quest of beauty, to the palaces of the Augusti. Constantius was beautiful, and beautiful too was Julian; but neither of them entirely satisfied my longings. But now I am come to see thee, oh boy-emperor, boy-father, boy who surpassest hoary virtue; oh blessed prize of my long pilgrimage from one end of the earth to the other; and all my heart rejoices.'

Mindful of the jealous master whom he serves, Themistius here inserts a little laudation of Valens who has wedded Philosophy to Power, and has made barbarians civilised: he praises his care for the supply of the Eastern capital with corn, and the labour with which he has constructed the aqueduct which from a distance of 120 miles brought water over hill and dale to Constantinople<sup>1</sup>. Then he touches on a more delicate theme of praise, the contrast between Gratian and his father. 'It was not indeed my fortune ever to behold the savage beauty of Valentinian, but I now see it softened and made loveable in the heavenly face of his son. The evil that was done by the harsh counsellors of his father, Gratian cannot entirely undo, for he cannot raise the dead, but—an almost greater marvel—he repays the sums unjustly exacted by their oppressions. The Treasury was formerly a very lion's den, with all the footsteps pointing towards the home of the king of beasts, and none emerging from it: but now, far more splendid because more righteous, are the marks of the gold that issues from the Treasury than of that

<sup>1</sup> Part of this aqueduct is yet visible and is one of the finest bits of Roman Constantinople still in existence.

which enters it. Titus thought that day lost in which he had done good to no one. Gratian misses not one hour from his benevolent labours. Entering into his *secretum* at the beginning of the day he asks himself, 'Whom to-day shall I rescue from death? To whom shall I grant a pardon? To whom can I preserve his paternal abode?'

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'The character of the Prince transmits itself through all the ranks of his subordinates. As the satraps of Alexander the Great imitated the slight deformity of his person (his neck inclining somewhat more to the left shoulder than to the right), so the Prefects of Gratian have their minds turned to noble deeds by the example of their lord. Groans are no longer heard in the court-house. The rack, unused, is falling to pieces with age. Those calculators of ruin, those sleuth-hounds of the Treasury who hunted up its long-forgotten claims, have all disappeared, and the records which they left behind them, the fire has destroyed.'

Themistius then proceeds to praise the young Emperor's love of peace and his power of fascinating the barbarians. 'Not philosophers only but barbarians love this beautiful Emperor; they gladly bow their heads before him, vanquished by his genius. Not the horse and his rider covered with complete mail ever fought so powerfully for Rome against the barbarians, as the beauty of Gratian and his symmetry of soul. Those who used to ravage our fields are now crossing the Rhine in multitudes, only to sue for his favour. They bring gifts who used to plunder, and their fierce spirit melts away under the magic charm of this young man's attractiveness.'

After some more compliments of this kind to the



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Emperor, the orator, reverting to his first thought, declares that his quest of beauty ends in that vast, that infinite sea of beauty, Rome. With some words of real eloquence he praises her Senate, her effigies of the gods, her nation of sculptured heroes, and with no obscure allusion to the ascendancy of the heathen party in Rome he declares, 'To you we owe it, oh ye happiest of men, that the gods have not yet left this world of ours. It is you who have till now successfully resisted the attempt to sever the human nature from the divine. Let us then rejoice in white garments on this whitest of days. Come, oh Senators! invite your young warriors to return from their tents. Let not Rhine, or Tigris, or Euphrates delay their homeward march. Rome delights in the return of her sons, bearing gory spoils, but bearing also the holier, bloodless trophies of gentleness and love of man. May the father of gods and men, Jupiter founder and preserver of Rome, and may Minerva our mother, and Quirinus the divine guardian of the Roman dominion, grant to me and mine ever to love this sacred City, and to be loved by her in return.'

Consulship of  
Ausonius.

End of 379.

Such was the panegyric pronounced by the Byzantine orator upon the young Emperor of the West, in the Senate-house at Rome. Nearly four years later, when Valens had lain for more than a year in his undistinguished Thracian grave, and when Gratian was holding the first place in the Imperial partnership, his old tutor, Ausonius, stood before him in the palace at Trier to express his thanks for an honour (still the highest which any but an emperor could hold), the consulship which he had received at the hands of his Imperial pupil. About a twelvemonth before, when



Gratian was at Sirmium, anxiously watching the movements of the triumphant Goths, and arranging for the association of Theodosius in the Imperial dignity, he still found leisure to remember his former preceptor by the banks of the Moselle, to ordain that he should be Consul for the year, first in dignity of the two<sup>1</sup>, and to send him, in order to lend glory to his installation, the very same robe, adorned with embroidered palm-branches, which Constantine the Great had worn when he bore the office of Consul<sup>2</sup>. With the same courteous condescension to the wishes, we may perhaps say to the vanity of his elderly preceptor, Gratian arranged to return by forced marches from Thrace to Gaul, in order to hear the oration which he uttered on divesting himself of the much-prized dignity. With a droll mixture of abject veneration for his Imperial pupil and delight in having attained the supreme honour of a consulship, Ausonius tells over again the story of Gratian's epistle, in which he announced that 'he was

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<sup>1</sup> The words of Gratian, in conferring the office, were 'te consulem designavi et declaravi et priorem nuncupavi.' As Gratian was at this time Emperor both of East and West, and as both Ausonius and Olybrius his colleague were Western officials, it was necessary that the Emperor should settle the question of precedence between them. The general rule at this time seems to have been that one Consul should be nominated by the Eastern and one by the Western Augustus, and that each should have precedence in the Fasti of his own half of the Empire.

<sup>2</sup> 'Namque iste habitus, [palmata vestis] ut in pace consulis est, sic in victoria triumphantis. Parum est, si qualis ad me trabea mittatur, interroges, te coram promi jubes. Nec satis habes ut largitionum ministri ex more fungantur. Eligis ipse de multis, et cum elegeris, munera tua verborum honore persequeris. "Palmatam," inquis, "tibi misi in qua divus Constantinus parens noster intextus est." It was Gratian's marriage to the daughter of Constantius which entitled him to speak of relationship with Constantine.

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going to pay a long-due debt and still remain a debtor.' 'Thus you wrote, "When I was revolving in my mind, alone, the question of the creation of consuls for the year, according to my usual custom, with which you are acquainted, I asked counsel of God, and following his guidance I have designated and declared you as consul, and have announced you as foremost in rank."' These words are commented upon by the grateful poet through a whole paragraph of adoring adulation. But we may pass over these painful self-prostrations and need not follow Ausonius in the comparison which he institutes between himself and other Imperial tutors<sup>1</sup> who had been honoured with consulships. It is more to our purpose to enquire what hints the orator lets fall of the character of him whom, with a natural play upon the words, he delights to call the 'gracious,' the 'grateful,' and the 'gratitude-inspiring' Gratian. Ausonius, like Themistius, contrasts the rule of the son with that of the father. 'The Palace,' says he, 'which you received so terrible, you have rendered loveable. . . . You, the son of Valentinian, whose goodness was so exalted, whose affability so ready' (this sounds almost like satire), 'whose severity so restrained; you, having established the welfare of the State, have understood that it is possible to be most gentle without any injury to discipline.' Ausonius commemorates the destruction of the taxing-registers, 'those trees of ancient fraud, those seeds of future injustice<sup>2</sup>.' He too, like the Eastern orator, reminds his hearers of the celebrated saying of Titus about his 'lost day,' and declares that

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, Quintilian, Titianus, Fronto.

<sup>2</sup> A similar conflagration by order of Trajan is depicted on a bas-relief in the Roman Forum.

every moment of Gratian's time is devoted to alleviating the pressure on his subjects. In words which recall the opening of his own *Ephemeris* he sketches the daily life of the young sovereign, who from his boyhood has never begun the day without a prayer to Almighty God, and then with cleansed hands and a pure heart has gone forth to his business or his pleasure. 'Whose gait was ever seen more modest than yours? Whose familiar intercourse with his friends more condescending, or whose attitude on parade more erect? In athletics who ever showed himself so swift a runner, so lithe a wrestler, so lofty a leaper? No one has hurled the javelin further, or showered his darts more thickly or more certainly reached his mark.' 'We have seen you like the Numidian cavalry, at the same time stretching the bow and relaxing the reins of your steed, with one and the same blow urging on the lazy horse and correcting the restless one. But then what restraint you exercise over yourself! At the table what priest is more abstinent? In the use of wine what grey-beard is more sparing? Your chamber is holy as the altar of Vesta, your couch is chaste as the couch of a Pontifex.' 'We have heard much of the affability of Trajan who was wont to visit his friends in sickness. You not only visit but heal: you procure nurses, you make ready the food, you administer the fomentations, you pay for the drugs, you comfort those who are stricken, you rejoice with those who are convalescent. Often, if anything untoward had happened in war, I have seen you going round the tents of a whole legion, asking each man how he fared<sup>1</sup>, examining the soldiers' wounds and urging the prompt and

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<sup>1</sup> 'Satin' salve quaerere, = asking them 'Are you pretty well?'

BOOK I. continuous application of the proper remedies. I have  
 CH. 7. seen some who had no appetite for food take it when  
 379. you commended it to them. I have heard you utter  
 the words which gave courage for recovery. I have  
 seen you conveying this man's baggage by the mules of  
 the court, giving that one a horse for his special ac-  
 commodation; making up to one for the services of  
 a missing horse-boy, filling at your own charges the  
 empty purse of another, or covering his nakedness with  
 raiment. All was done kindly and unweariedly with  
 the greatest sympathy, but with no ostentation. You  
 gave up everything to the sick: you never reproached  
 with your benefits those who had recovered.' 'In dis-  
 charge of an Emperor's duty you gave easy access to  
 your person to those who invoked your aid: but you  
 did more than this, for you never even complained  
 of the interruption.'

Declining  
 popularity  
 of Gratian.

The picture which is drawn by the two orators of  
 the young and brilliant Emperor, beautiful in person,  
 affable in manners, generous with his purse and ex-  
 celling in all manly exercises, is one which has cer-  
 tainly many lines of truth; but there were other  
 elements in Gratian's character, other causes tending to  
 overcloud the early brightness of his popularity, which  
 we can learn from no panegyric and only dimly infer  
 from the tragedy of his fall.

Strength  
 of the  
 heathen  
 party at  
 Rome.

At Rome, which though it had ceased to be the main  
 residence of the Emperors could yet exercise some  
 influence on their fate, Gratian's uncompromising  
 Christianity lost him the favour of many powerful  
 citizens. Heathenism died hard under the shadow of  
 the Capitol. Intertwined as it was with all the tradi-  
 tions of the world-conquering City from Numa to



Augustus, it seemed to many a Roman patriot that the preservation of the worship of Jupiter and Mars, of Rhea and Vesta and Ceres, was absolutely essential to the safety of the State. While the Pagans were at this time a small and discredited remnant in the new Christian city<sup>1</sup> by the Bosphorus, they were probably an actual majority in the Senate of Old Rome: at any rate they were numerous enough to make a formidable resistance to the policy of suppression, which Gratian, admonished by Ambrose and fired by the example of Theodosius, was eager to apply to the ancient religion.

A striking proof of the ascendancy of Ambrose was afforded by the young Emperor's action in reference to the Altar of Victory. After the battle of Actium, Augustus, now sole master of the Roman world, erected in the Senate-house an altar, above which stood a statue brought originally from Tarentum, representing Victory in her usual attitude of eager forth-reaching speed, standing on a globe. On this altar, for nearly four hundred years, the senators had been wont, before commencing their deliberations, to burn incense to the goddess whose faithful companionship had borne the standards of the legions from the little city by the Tiber to the Atlantic and the Euphrates. Constantius, an Arian, but strong in his zeal against heathenism, removed the altar on the occasion of his visit to Rome. Julian, of course, replaced it; and the tolerant Valentinian appears to have suffered it to remain. Fresh from his communings with Ambrose, and with the treatise *De Fide* accompanying him on his journeys, the young Gratian ordered the removal of the idolatrous

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Altar of  
Victory in  
the Senate-  
house.

357.

<sup>1</sup> 'Constantinopolim immo vero Christianopolim' (Maximin apud Waitz, 'Ueber das Leben und die Lehre des Ulfila,' p. 16).



BOOK I. altar<sup>1</sup>. A further proof of his zeal for Christianity  
 CH. 7. was afforded by an edict which appeared in the year  
 382, forbidding the people to contribute to the ex-  
 penses of the heathen sacrifices and confiscating to the  
 use of the Imperial treasury the rich revenues which  
 were appropriated to the service of the temples, and  
 even to the support of the noble maidens, whose duty  
 it was to tend the sacred fire of Vesta<sup>2</sup>.

These successive blows aimed at the ancient religion,  
 roused the indignation of the Roman senators. A  
 deputation, headed by the orator Symmachus, set forth  
 to wait upon the Emperor and remonstrate against the  
 recent edicts. Pope Damasus of Rome, however, sent a  
 counter-petition, which professed to utter the sentiments  
 of many Christian senators and innumerable other  
 private citizens, and which disavowed the prayer of the  
 heathen remonstrants. This counter-petition, backed  
 by the powerful word of Ambrose of Milan, attained its  
 end, and the young Emperor sent away unheard the  
 members of the ancient nobility of Rome who had  
 travelled from the Tiber to the Moselle for the sake of  
 an audience<sup>3</sup>.

Title  
 'Pontifex  
 Maximus.'

This rebuff to the heathen senators may perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Gothofred makes the date of this order of Gratian 376, but Seeck with more probability assigns it to 382.

<sup>2</sup> This decree is not in the Theodosian Code, but it is quoted by Honorius (Cod. Theod. xvi. 10. 20), and we get the date (approximately) from Ambrose, Epist. i. 17. 10, 'Nam et ante biennium ferme,' etc. This letter was written in 384.

<sup>3</sup> It is perhaps doubtful whether the abortive embassy of the Senate went as far as Trier. The words of Ambrose, 'Nunc libellum ego [Gratiano] direxi,' seem to imply that Gratian was not at Milan; but the Theodosian Code shows that he was in the middle of August, 382, at Verona, and that is not an unlikely place for the deputation to have visited.

have occurred about the same time with an equally conspicuous proof of Gratian's zeal for Christianity, given to the College of Priests. The emperors of the family of Constantine, though presiding in the councils of Bishops and settling disputed points of Christian doctrine, had yet on some occasions 'bowed themselves in the house of Rimmon,' and had humoured the heathenism of Old Rome by accepting some of the titles, and perhaps even performing some of the sacrifices which marked the semi-religious character of the Pagan emperors. Not so, however, the young and enthusiastic Gratian. He had never donned the pontifical robe, nor had he ever, since he assumed the reins of power, allowed himself to be described as Pontifex Maximus<sup>1</sup>. It was perhaps with a faint hope of inducing him to reconsider his decision against Paganism that the College of Pontifices now<sup>2</sup> appeared before him, beseeching him to accept from their hands the long white linen robe with purple border which belonged to him of right, and like one of the old Caesars of conquering Rome, to appear before the people as the greatest of the priestly order, the Pontifex Maximus. Their prayers were vain: Gratian utterly refused to receive the robe, saying emphatically that it was unlawful for a Christian to wear such a garment. The priests retired, but he who was first in rank among them was heard to mutter, 'If the Emperor does not

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<sup>1</sup> Mommsen (*Römisches Staatsrecht*, ii. 762 and 1054) notices one inscription in which Gratian bears the title P. M., but it dates from 370, five years before the death of his father.

<sup>2</sup> We have really no authority for placing this story of the rejection of the robe at so late a period of Gratian's reign. But it seems to fit in well with the other events of 382.

BOOK I. choose to be called Pontifex, there will nevertheless  
 CH. 7. very speedily be a Pontifex, Maximus.' There was perhaps a pause between the last two words, and men not long after thought they discovered in them somewhat of the nature of a prophecy<sup>1</sup>.

Other  
 causes of  
 unpopu-  
 larity.

The discontent of the fossil Pagan Conservatives of Rome would perhaps not have greatly endangered the throne of Gratian had his administrative qualities and his popularity with the army fulfilled the promise of the earlier years of his reign. Unfortunately this was not the case. There are signs that the counsellors who surrounded him, and who had advised the punishment of the ministers of Valentinian, were themselves wanting in firmness, perhaps in integrity, and that under their lax rule the exchequer was becoming exhausted and the judgment-seat corrupt. Gratian himself, with all his amiable and admirable qualities, with his personal beauty, his eloquence, and even his poetical gifts, his courage, his frugality, and his unspotted chastity, lacked the one virtue indispensable to the ruler of an autocratic empire, diligence. Men saw him with dismay at a time when the defence of the tottering realm would

The Pope  
 as Pontifex  
 Maximus.

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, iv. 36. This priestly pun or prophecy had a meaning which reached further on into the future than the author himself knew. It was true indeed that if the Emperor refused the mysterious title of Greatest Pontifex, with its accumulated sanctity of ages, that title would not be lost. Another race of men, another dynasty, one of priests, even now emerging from persecution through popularity into power was ready to assume the dropped dignity. Theodosius apparently never called himself Pontifex Maximus, but in the year 417 (if the letter be authentic) Zosimus (the pope, not the historian) already speaks of himself quite naturally as *Summus Pontifex*. (Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum, pp. 938, 971; ed. Coustant. Paris, 1721.) When the change from *Summus* back to the more familiar *Maximus* was made does not seem to be clearly ascertained.

have well-nigh over-taxed the industry of Marcus Aurelius, imitating instead the athletic frivolities,—  
 certainly not the cruelty of the unworthy son of Aurelius, Commodus. His vast game preserves (*vivaria*), rather than the camp or the judgment-hall, were the almost constant resort of the young Augustus. Night and day his thoughts were engrossed with splendid shots, made or to be made, and his success herein seemed to him sometimes to be the result of divine assistance<sup>1</sup>. The statesmen in his councils may have mourned over this degeneration of an able commander into a skilful marksman; but a more powerful cause of unpopularity with the rank and file of his army existed in the favour with which he viewed the barbarians, formerly his enemies, now his allies. Doubtless he saw that both in stature, in valour, and in loyalty, the Teutonic antagonists of Rome were superior to her effete offspring; and surrounding himself with a guard selected from the nation of the Alani, whose prowess he had tested as an enemy in his Pannonian campaign of 380, he bestowed on them rich presents, entrusted to them confidential commands, and even condescended to imitate the barbarous magnificence of their attire.

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, xxxi. 10. 18-19. *Epitoma de Vita et Moribus Imperatorum*, xlvii. The latter author says that Gratian 'Cunctis fuisset plenus bonis, si ad cognoscendam Reipublicae gerendae scientiam animum intendisset, a quâ prope alienus non modo ingenio sed etiam exercitio fuit.' It is interesting to observe the complete accordance as to Gratian's character of two independent sources like Ammianus and the Epitomist, and their confirmation both by the speech and by the silence of the Panegyrist. Eunapius, as we might expect, tends towards a harsh judgment, and says that 'being young and having been bred in the purple, he had never learned what it is to rule, and what to be ruled' (Frag. 48, p. 84, ed. Bonn).



BOOK I.  
CH. 7.Discontent  
of soldiers  
in Britain.

The preference of 'these few Alani to the so-called Roman soldiery' (themselves perhaps, if the truth were known, the sons and grandsons of barbarians) alienated from the Emperor the hearts of his old comrades. The fire of discontent went smouldering through the army of Gaul, and at length reached the legions of Britain, who, doubtless in a state of chronic discontent at their exile to a misty and savage island, where the sun warmed them not nor could wine be purchased out of the pay of a legionary, surrounded also by that abiding atmosphere of anarchy, in which it is the delight of a Celtic population to live, were always ready on the slightest provocation to forswear the oaths which bound them to the reigning Augustus and proclaim a new Emperor, under whose standards they might march to pleasure and the South.

Maximus  
the  
Spaniard.

The aspiring officer who made the discontent of the army the lever of his own ambition, was a certain Maximus, a Spaniard, like Theodosius, variously represented to us as the comrade<sup>1</sup> and as the butler<sup>2</sup> of that Emperor. It has been already said that certain detachments of Spanish troops were regularly detailed for service in Britain: for instance, the camps of Cendercum and Cilurnum in Northumberland were garrisoned by the first and second 'ala' of the Asturians respectively. It is possible that Maximus may have originally entered the island as a private soldier in one of these detachments; may have held some inconspicuous place in the military household of the elder Theodosius, and having recommended himself to that

<sup>1</sup> Θεοδοσίῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ . . . συστρατηνεσάμενος (Zosimus, iv. 35).

<sup>2</sup> 'Ille quondam domus tuæ [Theodosie] negligentissimus vernula, mensularumque servilium statarius lixa' (Pacatus, Panegyric, xxxi.).



general by some deed of daring, may have been promoted by him to the place of tribune or centurion. However this may be, he appears at the time of the mutiny to have borne the reputation of an able and trustworthy officer. By repeating and magnifying the calumnies against Gratian, and by the adroit use of hints which were perhaps not quite unfounded, that Theodosius had not forgiven the house of Valentinian for his father's death, and would behold its downfall and his fellow-countryman's elevation with pleasure, he seems to have persuaded the mutinous soldiers to invest him with the Imperial purple. There was, however, some show of reluctance on his part, and it is possible that he was rather the instrument than the author of the mutiny<sup>1</sup>.

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Maximus, at the head of his army, consisting probably of the greater part of three legions stationed in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and landed at the mouth of the Rhine. Gratian, who was engaged in hostile operations against the Alamanni<sup>2</sup>, found on his return to headquarters that many of his soldiers had gone over to the standards of his rival. He had still however a considerable army, and his veteran counsellor and general, Merobaudes, remained faithful, as did another loyal and brave barbarian officer, Count Vallio. The armies met in the neighbourhood of Paris, but there was no pitched battle. For five days there

Maximus  
enters  
Gaul.

<sup>1</sup> One has to speak thus doubtfully because of the strong assertion of Orosius, 'Maximus, vir quidem strenuus et probus, atque Augusto dignus nisi contra sacramenti fidem per tyrannidem emersisset, in Britannio *invitus* propemodum ab exercitu imperator creatus' (Hist. vii. 34).

<sup>2</sup> So says Socrates, H. E. v. 11.

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were slight and indecisive skirmishes, but during all this time Maximus and his right-hand man Andragathius, the commander of his cavalry, were tampering with the fidelity of Gratian's troops, recounting, doubtless, and aggravating the grievances of the Roman soldiers, postponed as they were to the pampered Alani, magnifying the frivolity and the incapacity of the new Commodus, and insisting that this young Emperor of barbarians must be displaced to make way for one who was loyal to the genius of Rome.

Gratian  
deserted  
by his  
soldiers.

Too late the unhappy Gratian found that his soldiers' fidelity was a broken reed, that battle with the enemy was out of the question, and that his only safety lay in flight. This fatal termination of the struggle was partly due to his own generosity and improvidence, which had so exhausted the Imperial treasury that he had no power of winning back the lost affections of the soldiery by a lavish donative. When he saw the Mauritanian cavalry crossing the plain with loud shouts of acclamation to 'Maximus Augustus,' and other legions and squadrons preparing to follow their example, he knew that the game was lost, and with three hundred horsemen he hurried from the field.

Gratian's  
flight.

Andragathius pursued the Imperial fugitive with a picked body of horsemen. Gratian hurried southward, hoping to reach the friendly shelter of his brother's court at Milan. No city would open her gates to the hunted wayfarer, who but yesterday was 'lord of the universe.' We have a pathetic picture of his journey from the hand of Ambrose, the friend whose name was constantly on his lips in these melancholy days, and

the thought of whose grief for him made his own grief more bitter<sup>1</sup>. Deserted by all those on whose devotion he had a hereditary claim, with no friend to share the dangers of the way, the splendours of the Imperial table replaced by the hardships of actual hunger and thirst, Gratian still found comfort and support in that Christian faith, the reality of which in him was far more powerfully attested by the help which he drew from it in his hour of ruin, than by all the edicts for the repression of heresy which he had launched in the day of his prosperity<sup>2</sup>. 'Surely,' said he, 'my soul waiteth upon God. My enemies can slay my body, but they cannot extinguish the life of my soul.' His flight was at length arrested by a cruel stratagem. As he drew near to Lyons he perceived a litter being borne, apparently by unarmed domestics, along the opposite bank of the Rhone. It was reported that the litter contained his newly-wedded wife<sup>3</sup>, and the eager husband hastened across the river to welcome her. Forth from the litter stepped, not the longed-for wife, but the traitor Andragathius, who carried Gratian a prisoner within the walls of Lyons. Some show of outward respect was paid to the unhappy captive, who was even pressed to resume the Imperial purple, and was invited to a sumptuous banquet. His apprehensions of danger were soothed by a solemn oath that no harm should happen to him; and then, apparently in the midst of the feasting, the purple-robed Emperor was

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Death of  
Gratian.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tu me inter tua pericula requirebas, tu in tuis extremis me appellabas, meum de te plus dolebas dolorem' (De Obitu Valentiniani Consolatio, 79).

<sup>2</sup> This thought is admirably expressed by Richter (p. 573).

<sup>3</sup> Lacta, his second wife, Constantia having died some years before.

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CH. 7.

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struck down by the hand of an assassin. With his last breath the victim called upon Ambrose<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> For the details of Gratian's murder we are chiefly indebted to St. Ambrose, an unimpeachable authority, but whose account is rendered somewhat obscure by being thrown into the shape of a Commentary on the 61st (in our Version 62nd) Psalm, and by the parallel which the preacher seeks to draw between the sufferings of Gratian and those of Christ. (In Psalm lxi. Enarratio.) The story of the litter rests on the authority of Socrates (v. 11) and Sozomen (vii. 13), and may perhaps be reconciled with that of Ambrose in the manner suggested above, especially as Jerome (Ep. ad Praesidium) speaks of 'foeda captivitas' as preceding 'miserabilis interitus' ('Necdum annus completus est, quo principem Gratianum procedente exercitu suo, ante foeda captivitas, dehinc miserabiliter oppressit interitus'). This shows that Sozomen is wrong in making the murder follow immediately on his capture by Andragathius. Zosimus apparently has confused Lugdunum (*Lyons*) and Singidunum (*Belgrade*), and goes wildly astray in his geography in consequence.

#### NOTE D. THE ALTAR OF VICTORY.

It may be a convenience to the reader to have the chief events of the long and stubborn controversy in reference to the Altar of Victory presented in the form of a summary. NOTE D.

Altar of Victory placed in the Senate-house by Augustus after the battle of Actium, B.C. 29; removed by Constantius during his visit to Rome, A.D. 357; replaced by Julian, 360-363; removed by Gratian, possibly in 376, but more probably in 382; embassy of Symmachus and other Roman nobles to remonstrate against the removal; influenced by Pope Damasus, Gratian refuses them an audience, 382; petition of the Senate for the restoration of altar, 384; first letter of St. Ambrose to Valentinian II against this petition; *Relatio* of Symmachus, pleading with Theodosius for the restoration of the altar; second letter of St. Ambrose replying to the *Relatio*, 384; renewed embassies of the Senate to Theodosius and Valentinian II (Ambrose, Epistol. 57, 4), circa 391 and 392; the altar restored by Eugenius, 393 (Paulinus, Vita Ambrosii, 26); doubtless finally removed by Theodosius after the overthrow of Eugenius, 395. But this is not expressly stated by the historians.

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#### NOTE E. ST. CHRYSOSTOM ON THE DEATHS OF EMPERORS.

A passage in a letter of St. Chrysostom addressed 'to a young widow,' throws an interesting light on the state of the Empire, and on the anxiety with which the career of Gratian was observed by his contemporaries:—'And to leave old matters, of those who have reigned over our generation, nine in all, two only have died by a common death. But of the rest, one by an usurper, one in a war, one by a conspiracy of his household guards, one by the very man who raised him to the throne and put the purple robe upon him.' NOTE E.

Apparently St. Chrysostom's list of nine Emperors reaches from



NOTE E. Constantine the Great to Valens. The two who died by a natural death are Constantine I and Constantius II. Then come four violent deaths: Constans by order of the usurper Magnentius, Constantine II in the war with his brother, Jovian by the treachery of his guards (St. Chrysostom must have accepted some version of that story which has not found favour with historians), and Gallus by order of his cousin Constantius, who had raised him to the throne. St. Chrysostom then proceeds:—'Julian fell in battle with the Persians, Valentinian died in a fit of rage, and Valens, together with his retinue, was burnt in a house to which the Goths set fire. Of the wives whom these Emperors married, some, they say, died of poison, and others of very despair. And of those widows who yet survive, one, having an orphan child, fears and trembles lest any of the rulers through fear of the future should destroy it; and the other, with difficulty, by the entreaty of many persons, has been recalled from the banishment to which the former Emperor had sentenced her.'

The first of these widows is pretty clearly the widow of Jovian, who trembles for the safety of her son, Varronianus; the second may, perhaps, be Faustina, the widow of Constantius II, who, as having been to a certain extent involved in the usurpation of Procopius, might easily incur the resentment of Valens.

Chrysostom continues:—'Of the wives of the reigning Emperors, one is racked by constant anxiety on account of the youth and inexperience of her husband; the other is subject to no less anxiety for her husband's safety, inasmuch as ever since his elevation to the throne he has been engaged in constant warfare with the Goths.' The first of these ladies is evidently Constantia, wife of Gratian; the second Flaccilla, wife of Theodosius.

I owe this interesting quotation to the Rev. W. R. W. Stephens' *St. Chrysostom, his Life and Times* (p. 94), and I have in the main followed his interpretation of the passage.





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